

## Egyptians opposed to war arrested

CAIRO (R) — An Egyptian human rights group accused the government Saturday of clamping down illegally on opponents to the Gulf war. "Selective measures, such as military tribunals and imprisonment, have been directed against those opposed to the (Gulf) war wishing to express their opinion," said a statement by the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (EOHR). Egypt, a key Arab member of the anti-Iraq alliance, has sent about 35,000 troops to the multinational force in the Gulf. Most Egyptians have backed President Hosni Mubarak's firm anti-Iraq stand but opposition leaders predict more people will turn against the war as fighting increases. "We note growing violation of human rights in Egypt since the Gulf crisis erupted... and fear an increase in such abuses as the circle of opponents to the war and Egypt's military participation widens," the EOHR statement added. It said several opposition leaders were illegally barred from leaving the country last year while two editors of opposition newspapers were being tried by military courts. About 500 people attended an anti-war meeting that day at the headquarters of the leftist Unionist Progressive Party.

DRIVER'S  
SERIALS  
DIVISION

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## Iraqis down 2 U.S. planes; fire missile at Israel

### Israelis withhold site of attack

Combined agency dispatches

ONE MISSILE WAS fired Saturday from western Iraq at Israel and struck, but the army withheld the exact location.

"There has been one missile fired and one hit reported," army spokesman Nachman Shai told Israel Radio. "At this moment we are searching for the site of impact," he said. "As far as we know there have been no injuries or damage."

Bridgadier-General Shai did not say in which area the missile landed nor whether the U.S.-supplied Patriot missile defense system was fired. Reporters in Tel Aviv, who have heard sound of the Patriots being fired in the past, said they heard no such noise Sunday.

Air raid sirens sounded throughout Israel at 8:30 p.m. (1830 GMT) indicating a possible attack. The alert was announced on the radio at 9:07 p.m. (1907 GMT).

When the sirens sound, Israelis are ordered to don gas masks and enter sealed rooms to protect them from chemical attacks.

Some Israelis apparently have begun to get law about taking cover, and Gen. Shai appealed on the radio for them not to go outside to try to see what was happening.

"Everyone who is standing on the roofs is endangering their lives," he said.

Iraq has repeatedly threatened to hit the Jewish-state with chemicals. Previous attacks all have involved conventional warheads.

There have been eight previous missile attacks aimed at the Jewish state since the start of the Gulf war Jan. 17. Two people were killed and two died of heart attacks in earlier barrages on the Tel Aviv area. At least 270 were wounded, and more than 1,300 apartments were damaged.

U.S.-supplied Patriot missiles have intercepted incoming Iraqi missiles on at least three occasions.

The last two missiles landed in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, but caused no casualties and no serious damage.

The Patriots were not fired to defend against these attacks Jan. 28 and Jan. 31, and army officials asserted the region was outside the Patriots' area of coverage.

The strikes in the West Bank have raised criticism because the army has been slow to distribute gas masks to Palestinians.

(Continued on page 2)



A residential area hit in the allied bombardment at the southern Iraqi city of Basra. (Photo by R. Hassan — Al Qadissiya)

## Iraq vows to fight with everything it has

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQ, SIX MONTHS to the day since its takeover of Kuwait, said Saturday it would fight with everything from knives to weapons of mass destruction in its war against the U.S.-led allied forces.

With its troops continuously pounced by U.S.-led aerial bombardment, Iraq said that this week showed that it still held the initiative in the Gulf war.

"We would like to reiterate an established eternal fact: Iraq's leadership, army, and people will not relinquish their country from Zakhru to Kuwait," Iraq's Defense Ministry's Al Qadisiyah newspaper said.

"For the sake of this noble legitimate objective... we will use all force and arms in our possession, beginning with the knife and bullets, arms of annihilation, and ending with the weapons of mass destruction, because nothing deserves to live after Iraq," the paper added.

Iraq has not yet carried out its threats to use chemical weapons in the Gulf war.

Al Qadisiyah said Iraq's threats into Saudi Arabia showed it still

held the initiative in the Gulf war and that the U.S.-led allied forces had no choice but to go into a ground battle.

"Despite imperialist, barbaric attack Iraq still holds the reins of power on the battlefield."

"The allied invasion forces are left with no choice but to fight the ground war and come face to face with the Iraqi army, a confrontation they have tried to avoid repeatedly," Al Qadisiyah said.

It said Iraq would make the battlefield "a place for a real massacre, and we will not give them the opportunity to remove their dead from the pools of blood in which they will float."

Al Qadisiyah said U.S. President George Bush was deluded if he imagines bombardment will cause Iraq to capitulate.

"We will accept nothing other than victory because it is the sole reality which is bound to guarantee our people's life and the honour and dignity of Iraq and the Arab Nation," the newspaper said.

Pentagon officials said Iraqi troops in Kuwait were still an effective fighting force despite the allied air assault.

"We have not written off the Iraqi army as a fighting force. We respect it," said army Lieutenant-General Tom Kelly, chief of joint operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS).

President Bush said he would not allow Iraq to stampede him into a premature and potentially blood ground campaign.

Mr. Bush also consoled the

wives and children of airmen downed by Iraq and promised families of front-line infantry troops that a ground war will "only begin if necessary and when we decide the time is right."

"We will conduct this conflict on our terms, on our timetable, not on Saddam Hussein's timetable," Mr. Bush said before a flag-waving audience composed mostly of families of members of the 24th infantry brigade mechanized, now on duty in the Gulf.

With more than 500,000 Americans deployed overseas, Mr. Bush told the families at home, "I know it's been tough, it may get tougher." He cited two families at Fort Stewart — one with three children, the other with two — in which both the father and mother were serving in the Gulf.

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## Hammadi ends Iran visit; speaker says

### Tehran will enter conflict if Israel does

Combined agency dispatches

Akbar Velayati were "good and fruitful."

Mr. Velayati told Tehran Radio that during lengthy talks, Mr. Hammadi was told that Iran's neutrality in the Gulf war could change if Israel attacked Iraq.

As Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Saadoun Hammadi headed home, President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani was quoted as describing the Gulf war as "the most saddening tragedy of today's humanity."

The Iranian news agency IRNA quoted Mr. Hammadi as saying his talks with Mr. Rafsanjani and Foreign Minister Ali

Rafsanjani, saying he would do anything to end the Gulf war, also sent a message to Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein Saturday on ways to balt the conflict.

IRNA said Mr. Rafsanjani handed the message to Mr. Hammadi.

"The only solution to the war is an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait and the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the region," IRNA quoted the president as telling Mr. Hammadi.

A senior Iranian official said last week that by sending its combat planes to Iran, Iraq probably wanted to preserve them from destruction until a ground offensive started.

(Continued on page 2)

## Oil slick hits Saudi coast; another spreads

DHAHRAN (R) — History's largest oil slick, oozing down from Kuwait, has hit Saudi Arabia's northeast coast, polluting miles of sandy beach, and a second slick coming from Iraq, has grown dramatically, officials said Saturday.

The main slick, 100 kilometres long and carrying the equivalent of three supertanker cargos, already spells catastrophe for marine life in the shallow waterway.

Kilometres of beach between Safaniyah in the north and Tanabah in the south are now heavily polluted... there are also heavy oil patches offshore," a Gulf-based expert said Saturday.

A U.S. official monitoring the pollution said the second slick, coming from Iraq's Mina Al Bakr

terminal near the mouth of the Shatt Al Arab waterway, was now the size of the first.

The second slick is now 48 miles (76 kilometres) long and eight miles (12.6 kilometres) wide. It's still growing but very slowly... we don't believe it's being deliberately pumped in and it may not be as thick as the first spill," he said.

Allied forces say Iraq deliberately caused the main slick by dumping an estimated 11 million barrels of crude from storage tanks and ships at Kuwait's Mina Al Ahmadi terminal. U.S. planes bombed the Kuwaiti terminal a week ago to destroy pump control and staunch the flow.

Iraq blames the disaster on allied air raids.

A southerly wind halted the

slick's advance Friday, pushing it offshore and raising hopes it would miss the Saudi coast. The wind changed later in the day, allowing normal current to take over.

Officials say traces of oil have begun appearing in the sea 20 kilometres north of Jubail, a port where industrial facilities threatened by the slick are located.

Authorities at Jubail have put triple layers of booms and skimmers in the lagoon to defend a 200-million-gallon (800 million litre) a day desalination plant which supplies three-quarters of the drinking water for the Saudi capital Riyadh.

"We hope that we don't have to shut down the desalination plant. We are optimistic that the

previous spill.

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(Continued on page 2)

## U.S. serviceman killed by 'friendly fire'

RIYADH (Agencies) — AN American serviceman was killed perhaps by "friendly fire," the U.S. military command said Saturday. Maj. Gen. Robert Johnston of the U.S. central command also said Iraq had made some other border crossing, but they were insignificant. U.S. troops exchanged anti-tank, grenade and machinegun fire with an Iraqi patrol that had slipped into Saudi Arabia and tried to ambush them, officers said. The intense 15-minute firefight Friday night was not believed to have caused casualties on either side but troops in the 2nd Airborne Division went on full combat alert to prepare for a possible Iraqi ground assault. About 25 Iraqis aboard two light vehicles armed with rocket-propelled grenades and machineguns slipped several kilometres inside Saudi Arabia after dark.

## U.S. concedes loss

Combined agency dispatches

TWO AMERICAN planes were shot down Saturday in the war with Iraq, the U.S. military command said.

The planes were identified as an A-10 and an A-6, said Major-General Robert Johnston of the U.S. central command.

He was speaking at a military briefing in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

He told reporters the craft were apparently hit by gunners who spotted them from the ground, rather than by electronically-operated command systems.

Search and rescue missions were going on to try to recover the pilots.

The latest crashes bring to 15 the number of U.S. planes downed in combat, according to allied figures. Five British planes, one Kuwaiti warplane and one Italian jet also have been downed since the Gulf war began Jan. 17.

Iraqi officials said Saturday morning there had been 18 bombing raids on residential areas.

There were no air raids over Baghdad Saturday morning, but before dawn there was a large explosion probably caused by a cruise missile. The site of the explosion and extent of damage could not be determined.

At least six ground-hugging Tomahawk cruise missiles fired from U.S. navy warships struck Baghdad during an hour-long barrage Friday, government officials said.

Two of them crashed in residential neighbourhoods and narrowly missed the abandoned U.S. embassy. Government officials said several people were killed or wounded by the missiles.

A military spokesman said on

(Continued on page 5)

## Mourners assail U.S.

By Rana Sabbagh

Reuters

MADABA — Mourners Saturday condemned U.S. President George Bush over the charred corps of three Jordanian oil truck drivers killed in air raids on the Iraqi highway to Jordan.

"Down with Bush... down with America..." shouted more than 200 mourners, all men, as coffins draped in Jordanian flags were taken in ambulances from the mortuary of a military hospital in Amman for burial at three separate sites.

"God make Iraq victorious... O Saddam don't care, we are ready" to avenge, the mourners chanted, in the freezing cold.

In Madaba, 35 kilometres south of Amman, the family and friends of dead driver Mohammad Mghazeza, a 45-year-old father of 11 children, gathered at a small Muslim cemetery.

As Mghazeza's body was lowered into his grave, local religious leaders continued cursing the United States and its allies for attacking Iraq.

"God save us from Bush, from (French President Francois) Mitterrand, from (British Prime Minister John) Major and from all the Arab tyrants who have sent their troops to join the infidels attacking Iraq," said Sheikh Suleiman Abu Ghail.

Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri this week accused U.S. and allied planes bombing Iraq of knowingly hitting Jordanian tank-trucks and civilian cars inside Iraq.

Police said five Jordanians, not four as officials earlier reported, and one Egyptian were killed in air attacks on the highway on Tuesday and Wednesday.

One Jordanian was buried on Friday and the body of another was still in Iraq.

The U.S. State Department has said it regretted any civilian casualties in the war to drive Iraq from Kuwait but could not

## King meets Japanese team

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein received at the Royal Court Saturday a Japanese parliamentary delegation headed by Deputy Toshi Yamaguchi, chairman of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party's (LDP) economic adaptation committee and of the parliament's Foreign Economic Affairs Committee.

Mr. Yamaguchi and the delegation members reviewed the situation in the Gulf region and voiced their appreciation of King Hussein's endeavours to resolve the crisis peacefully. They expressed hope that a ceasefire can be secured and a peaceful settlement of the crisis can be achieved.

King Hussein briefed the delegation on the dangers threatening the region in case of continued war and the role Jordan played to avert the war before it broke out.

The delegation members explained to the King the Japanese point of view on the crisis and lauded Jordan's humanitarian role in assisting evacuees coming from Iraq and Kuwait.

(Continued on page 2)



A scene from the site of an allied air attack in the governorate of Al Anbar (Al Qadissiya)

## Jordan rejects U.S. contention oil imports violate embargo

### Kingdom determined to defend airspace

By P.V. Vivekanand

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordanian officials

## Palestinians hungry for news on Gulf war

By Arthur Max  
The Associated Press

**OCCUPIED WEST BANK** — Like everywhere in the Middle East, radios in the West Bank are constantly tuned to news of the Gulf war.

By day, the Palestinians listen to Iraqi or Jordanian stations broadcasting depictions of Iraq's steadfast resistance to the U.S.-led alliance.

As dusk falls the dial turns to Israeli Radio, which broadcasts the air raid sirens whenever Iraq lobbs a missile at Israel.

An Iraqi Scud missile whizzed over Palestinian villages in the occupied West Bank Thursday, tracing a red streak through the rain and exploding with a hammer flash in an open field.

Israeli military censorship prohibited giving the location of the impact or other details that might permit Iraq to adjust the aim of its missiles.

It was the second time a missile fell short of Tel Aviv and landed in the West Bank, where one million Palestinians live.

The first rocket also caused no casualties, but the two incidents have tempered the Palestinians' support for Iraq with a fear of failing accidental victims to Iraq's attacks.

"Of course we are afraid. Next time it could hit our village. Why not?" said Khalid, a truck driver who was waiting at an Israeli

roadblock Friday while soldiers tramped through mud looking for where the missile landed the night before.

"I go to Tel Aviv every day at four in the morning to pick up goods. Do you think my wife isn't afraid? She tells me I should wait until daylight."

The Gulf war began like a ray of hope for the Palestinians, who were frustrated by the political impasse that continues in spite of their three-year uprising against Israel's occupation.

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein held out a promise of movement, however, when he tried to link the Arab-Israeli conflict with the Gulf crisis.

"When the crisis started everyone bought a new radio. We are listening all the time. We even sleep with the radio on," said Hosni Nafah, a bank employee.

"We listen to radio Monte Carlo, to Jordan, to Iraq, to the BBC, to Israel. This one lies about that one and that one lies about the other one. We don't know what's going on," he said.

In the meantime, expectations have faded that the Gulf war will bring any changes for the Palestinians.

"It's been the same since 1948. The year Israel was created and the Arabs and Israelis fought their first of five wars," said Nafah. "All talk, but nobody does anything. Power can do whatever it wants," he said.

## MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

### U.N. to decide on Iraqi request

**UNITED NATIONS** (AP) — The United Nations will decide next week whether it is safe to send U.N. personnel into Iraq to determine whether the war-stricken nation needs humanitarian aid, officials said Friday. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar will meet Monday with James Grant, the director of the U.N. Children's Fund, and throughout the week with senior officials of the World Health Organisation and other relief agencies, said U.N. spokesman Francois Giuliani. In response to an Iraqi request for relief aid, the two agencies said last week that they would look into the situation as soon as they could safely send staff members to Iraq. Iran has asked the Security Council's sanctions committee for permission to send food aid, mainly powdered milk and infant formula, to Iraqi civilians. Distribution of the aid would be supervised by the Iranian Red Crescent, that country's equivalent of the Red Cross. The sanctions committee said it needed a determination from the secretary-general on whether Iraq required assistance.

**Hanoi newspaper: Bush wants to rule Gulf**

**HANOI** (R) — Nhan Dan, the official newspaper of Vietnam's Communist Party, said Saturday Washington's aims in the Gulf war were to seize control of the oil-rich region and eradicate Iraq's military might. "The United States' target is not only to liberate of Kuwait but... also to exterminate the Iraqi administration, military strength and President Saddam Hussein himself," it said in the strongest attack on the United States since the war broke out. Nhan Dan's coverage of the Gulf fighting has been generally neutral. The government, which says it is neutral in the war, has urged both sides to seek peace. "The second U.S. target in this war is to control the oil-rich area in the Gulf, which produces more than 30 per cent of the world oil output, in order to manipulate Japan and its West European allies which depend on Gulf oil," it said.

### Iraq criticises India

**NICOSIA** (R) — Iraq said Saturday that India should abandon its "unfriendly course" and not allow any more U.S. transport planes, being used in the allied Gulf war effort, to refuel in Bombay. "We received with great surprise and regret the report that Indian authorities allowed 38 U.S. C-141 planes to refuel at Bombay airport under the flimsy pretext that these planes are not carrying weapons or destructive equipment, but are used for humanitarian purposes," a Foreign Ministry statement said. "While we reject this unfriendly course followed by the Delhi authorities, we also reject the pretext given and demand the Indian government should not repeat such behaviour," said the statement, broadcast by Baghdad Radio monitored in Cyprus. It said India's "behaviour... completely contradicts the non-aligned policy of India, one of the founding countries of the Non-Aligned Movement." India is trying to bring together leading members of the 102-nation Non-Aligned Movement to formulate a peace initiative on the Gulf war which started on Jan. 17. "What kind of humanitarian task is this that is carried out by the U.S. planes of death? Is the killing of innocents and the shelling of civilian, economic, religious, educational, and health centres listed under the conditions of humanity?" the Iraqi statement said.

### Belgium denies ransom report

**BRUSSELS** (R) — Belgium Saturday denied a report it paid a top Palestinian guerrilla \$3 million on ransom when he visited Brussels hours before the Gulf war began. The Flemish daily Het Laatste Nieuws, quoting a foreign ministry source, said a senior diplomat gave 100 million francs (\$3.3 million) to Fateh Revolutionary Council (FRC) spokesman Walid Khalid following the release of a Belgian family held hostage since 1987. "Foreign Minister Mark Eyskens formally denies the report according to which 100 million francs were paid as a ransom for the release of the Houekins family," the Foreign Ministry said in a terse statement. The scandal over Mt. Khaled, detained by Brussels police after he was spotted in the city's main square on Jan. 16, has deeply embarrassed Belgium's coalition government.

### S. African Muslims want to aid Iraq

**DURBAN**, South Africa (AP) — A Muslim group has asked the government for permission to transfer 2 million rand (\$800,000) to an overseas bank to help Iraq. The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) reported. A spokesman for the group told the SABC that international sanctions imposed against Iraq after its Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait had led to rampant disease and malnutrition. He said the money would be used to provide food and baby milk for Iraqis. There was no immediate government comment on the request, which would require approval from the South African foreign exchange. The government has supported the U.S.-led alliance fighting Iraq and offered use of its air bases and harbours to U.S. planes and ships.

### Police detain Syrian after fire

**MASSA**, Italy (R) — Police said they detained a Syrian Friday on suspicion of being the man who claimed responsibility for a fire at a northern Italian port this week. Police did not give the man's name but said he was aged 29 and came from Damascus. He had lived for several months near the north-west Italian port of Massa and worked for local marble quarries. Thursday's fire destroyed more than 1,000 tonnes of engine oil and other goods in storage tanks at Massa and halted port operations. The Italian news agency ANSA reported that a man speaking with a foreign accent telephoned its Florence office, claimed responsibility for the fire and threatened other attacks.

### AFP to sue Pentagon

**PARIS** (R) — The French news agency Agence France-Presse (AFP) said Friday it was taking legal action in the United States against the Pentagon for excluding it from U.S. Defence Department press pools. An AFP statement quoted the agency's lawyer, Joshua Kaufman, as saying a denial of access to the pools breached the first amendment of the American constitution guaranteeing freedom of expression. "We intend to seek temporary and permanent injunction against the DoD (Department of Defence), enjoining them from continuing to illegally bar AFP from its pools and denying them access to pool materials," Mr. Kaufman said. AFP said it was currently being denied access to news pictures of the Gulf war from DoD pools in Saudi Arabia. "AFP has sought access to these pools for several years and has been denied. No reason has ever been provided. There are no standards or criteria for pool participation. The decisions are arbitrarily made without any avenue for appeal or recourse," the statement said.

### WEATHER

*Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.*

### CHURCHES

*St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swieifh Tel. 810740.*

*Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.*

*De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.*

*Terrassante Church Tel. 625366.*

*Church of the Annunciation Tel. 638541.*

*Anglican Church Tel. 625383. Tel. 628543.*

*Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.*

*Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.*

*Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751.*

*Min./max. temp.*

*Amman 3 / 7*

*Aqaba 9 / 16*

*Deserts 2 / 12*

*Jordan Valley 11 / 13*

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*Aqaba 9 / 16*</p



volunteers to the People's Army come from all different walks of life (file photo)

## Thousands volunteer to defend nation

By Samia Nakhou

AMMAN — Artist Wassef Mwafi has laid down his brush and is learning to use a gun along with thousands of Jordanians who want to defend their country and, if possible, fight or defend Iraq.

"I feel threatened ... the war won't do me any good in war time. It won't defend me or defend my country," Mwafi, 35, said during a break in paramilitary training in Amman with Jordan's volunteer Popular Army.

Jordanian officials on Wednesday said 320,000 men and women had volunteered for the country's Popular Army since the Gulf crisis began on Aug. 2.

The volunteers, aged between 16 and 55, include doctors, engineers, lawyers, labourers and industrialists.

The Popular Army was founded in 1985 as a national defence force to back up the regular army in any attack on Jordan.

Its volunteer ranks have more than doubled since the

start of war between Iraq and U.S.-led forces, in a reflection of strong patriotic and Iraqi sentiment.

"People feel threatened, especially since all the countries surrounding Jordan are armed with sophisticated weapons and have fierce armies," Brigadier Ghazi Al Tayeb, commander of the People's Army, told Reuters.

He said he had been forced to quadruple the number of training courses to cope with the flood of volunteers since war started on Jan. 17 and keep up their "enthusiasm and drive."

"The average was 10 sessions every two months now it is 20 sessions every month," Tayeb said. Volunteers were put on standby after they completed training but were not given guns.

Mwafi and his comrades, clad in brown army fatigues, are following a five-week course in civil defence, first aid and protection against chemical warfare.

As a back-up to the 100,000-man regular army, they also learn to use light and medium

weapons, dig trenches, fortify positions and guard government installations and buildings.

"What is happening now is an onslaught against our culture and civilisation. They (the allied forces) want to turn Baghdad into a graveyard. The West wants to be the master of this world and we refuse to be slaves," Mwafi said.

Talal Abu Rayala, a 40-year-old civil engineer and father of three, explained why he wanted to fight for Baghdad.

"If Iraq is defeated then we will all fall. There will be no security in Jordan, Syria, Egypt or any other Arab country ... there will be instability everywhere," he said.

Many Jordanians and Palestinians have also gone to Iraq's embassy in Amman, pleading to be taken to the war front.

"We want to become martyrs. We want to die. Why are you preventing us from honour?" Khaled Al Abadi asked an embassy official. "Every time I come here you tell me not yet ... when are you going to take us?"

Earlier, Mwafi and his comrades, clad in brown army fatigues, are following a five-week course in civil defence, first aid and protection against chemical warfare.

As a back-up to the 100,000-

## Queen Noor receives Japanese delegation

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Saturday received members of the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party's group for evacuate relief who are currently visiting Jordan. The Queen briefed the delegation on the current situation of the evacuees and on the impact of the Gulf war on Jordan's economic and human development processes. Queen Noor also discussed with the Japanese group ways to support Jordanian income-generating schemes and to help combat poverty and safeguard the health and nutritional status of women and children. The Queen expressed Jordan's appreciation of Japan's assistance to the Kingdom during these hard times. The meeting was attended by Japanese ambassador to Jordan Tadzuyuki Nonoyama, head of the evacuee welfare committee Salameh Hammad and Noor Al Hussein Foundation's Director General Inaam Al Mufti.

## Christian, Muslim leaders meet

AMMAN (J.T.) — Heads of Christian communities in Jordan Saturday voiced their keenness on cooperation with the government in matters designed to enhance the sense of national belonging and national unity, and lauded the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs efforts in this regard.

Bishop Salim Al Sayegh of the Roman Catholic Church, Bishop Elia Khouri of the Anglican Church and Monsignor Raouf Najar, representative of the Apostolic delegation in Jordan voiced their support for the ministry during a meeting with Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Ibrahim Zeid Kilani.

They told the minister that they appreciated his mosque sermons in which he advocated cohesion among the Jordanian family and solid support for the Jordanian leadership.

Discussion during the meeting dealt with the looming danger which threatens the existence of all Jordanians. They explored means of consolidating national unity and thwarting any attempt to cause splits within Jordanian ranks.

Earlier, Kilani chaired a meeting of mosque preachers and stressed the need to bolster and increase public awareness in spiritual and national unity matters in view of the crucial circumstances facing the Arab and Islamic nations. Chief Islamic Justice Sheikh Mohammad Mheilan and the Kingdom's mufti were among those attending the meeting.

## Algerian doctors arrive in Baghdad

AMMAN (J.T.) — A group of 16 Algerian doctors arrived Saturday in Baghdad as a first batch of 400 Algerian physicians and specialists who have volunteered to offer medical assistance to the injured in Iraq as a result of the ongoing American-led aggression on the Arab country.

Earlier, doctors from Jordan, Tunisia and Palestine were sent to Iraq on the same humanitarian mission, and doctors from Libya and Morocco are expected to follow soon, according to the Amman-based Arab Doctors Union (ADU).

A spokesman for the ADU's health committee, which is organising the mission, said the union had earlier issued an appeal to all Arab states to send doctors and specialists to offer assistance to injured civilians in Iraq.

Upon their arrival in Amman en route to Baghdad Friday afternoon, the Algerian doctors expressed their readiness to do all they can to help the Iraqi people.

They all voiced absolute support for the Iraqis in their steadfastness and in repelling aggression on Iraqi territory, and said they felt it an honour to offer humanitarian assistance to their brothers and sisters now subjected to the U.S.-led aggression on the Arab Nation. The doctors denounced the stand of Arab states allied with U.S. and urged Arab doctors and nurses to offer assistance to the injured civilians.

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## Be light not fire

ONE EXPECTS a self-proclaimed superpower to be "a light unto the nations." The U.S. is certainly a superpower, but sadly it is more of a fire than light.

Consider if you will, the relationship between that huge, powerful country and a small country like Jordan. Right from the beginning of the Gulf crisis, Jordan maintained a stance that opposed the acquisition of land by force, recognised international legitimacy, abided by Security Council resolutions and, at the same time, rejected foreign intervention in the affairs of the region and the resort to force in solving regional conflicts. This Jordanian stand is based on a long tradition that Jordan applied to the other, older conflict of Lebanon, Palestine and as far back as 1961 Kuwait.

Aiding by Security Council Resolution 661 not to trade with Iraq, Jordan started importing all of its oil from Saudi Arabia on Sept. 1. Only 19 days later, the Saudis, acting in concert apparently with its "Big Brother," decided to cut the supply to Jordan on baseless grounds. With "silent" consent from the Americans, and with a waiver from the U.N. Security Council Sanctions Committee, Jordan started again to import its oil needs from Iraq, against money that country owes to the Kingdom. The arrangement went on for nearly five months, until the Americans and their allies last week bombed Jordanian oil tankers killing five Jordanians, one Egyptian and injuring 12 others.

Asked why allied jet fighters would attack Jordanian tankers, the U.S. State Department spokeswoman, Margaret Tutwiler, said Jordan was violating the Security Council's sanctions resolution. When further asked if the U.S. knew if Jordan had special permission to import oil from Iraq, Tutwiler replied: "No, we do not."

The fact that the U.S. did not know if Jordan had permission to import oil from Iraq and yet went ahead with bombing our tankers is only an indication of that superpower's disrespect and disregard for any world order, including the one it claims to defend. Had the U.S. been more responsible and less arrogant, it would have taken the trouble to check with the Security Council committee to ascertain whether Jordan was acting properly and legally before its air force killed innocent Jordanians and other civilians and destroyed their property.

Americans can continue to shoot from the hip in their own backyard if they so wish, but further irresponsible actions by their administration in this part of the world can only aggravate the already explosive situation and widen the war front irretrievably.

Jordan had all along warned against starting war against Iraq, and ever since fighting erupted the Kingdom has been urging an immediate ceasefire and the start of negotiations, not just to save Iraqi lives but American and European lives as well. That call is all the more urgent today, considering that America may be beginning to lose touch with reality and reasonableness.

## ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i daily commented Saturday on a statement by President Bush in which he expressed his dream of achieving a quick victory over Iraq in the ongoing Gulf war, but demanded that the American people shoulder more sacrifices to achieve that victory. The paper said that Bush should realise that though he started the aggression, it is not necessary that he would be able to maintain the initiative in the battles as the latest Khafji fighting had proved. Bush has expressed his grief over the death of American soldiers in the Khafji battle, but grief can by no means save the president from facing the truth that the Americans would be losing more men and material in such a conflict, said the paper. With every day that passes by, Bush bears more and more responsibility for the death of American soldiers; and this course can by no means achieve victory for the president, said the paper. Only through peace with Iraq can Bush achieve some kind of victory by saving the lives of his troops and preventing his country from facing another Vietnam, the paper continued. But, it added, the path to peace requires a lot of courage and moral commitment, not shedding the blood of more men and women in a losing war.

A number of columnists in Al Ra'i daily commented on the government's decision to allow private cars to run on alternate days, voicing criticism and disapproval of the decision which can by no means be helpful to limited income groups. Most citizens will be faced with extreme hardships as a result of this ill-planned decision, and more money will be spent on taxis which also consume fuel at any rate, says Fakhri Kawar. The writer notes that he received 75 telephone calls from members of the public complaining that they could not by any chance abide by the new regulations for social and economic reasons, and that they all expressed dismay for hearing such decision when other plans are more feasible and applicable without causing so much inconvenience to the majority of the public. According to Kawar, whole families and their children would be facing difficulties in finding alternative means of transport which are not regular in most districts of Amman and other towns in Jordan. Most of the callers expressed support for the government's endeavours to rationalise fuel consumption, but they all suggested that goal, the writer adds.

## Scenario that spells the end of the coalition

By Annika Savill

THE coalition against Iraq may be secure for now, but given a certain scenario, it will disintegrate. That risk, diplomats said yesterday, will come into play if the U.S.-led allies get Iraq out of Kuwait, but choose to continue to attack Iraq nonetheless.

British, French and Soviet diplomats conceded that such a situation would spell the end of unity among the Security Council's five permanent members. Out of the window would go France, which has more than 35 aircraft in the Gulf; the Soviet, who partook in a *de facto* of superpower unity at the start of the crisis, and China, whose allegiance was always in question.

Continuing to attack Iraq to get Iraqi forces out of Kuwait would be justifiable to Washington and London, as Tom King, the U.K. Secretary of State for Defence, outlined at the weekend, by the fact that U.N. Resolution 678 allows for all necessary means to "restore international peace and security in the area." But, said a Soviet

diplomat: "If we allow them to interpret 678 now as a mandate to destroy Iraq, what is to stop America in five years claiming the right to invade Indonesia over Timor?"

French officials recently said that if the allies were to try to attack Iraq beyond that, France would seek help from Moscow and Peking at the U.N. to halt the exercise. Britain may well argue that restoring peace and security justifies enforcing Iraq — to others, peace and security means something different.

President François Mitterrand privately has his keen interest in prosecuting the war is part intended to ensure that he will be a player in its aftermath. However, Mr. Mitterrand has other priorities to address. For one, there is the 2 million to 3 million North Africans living in France — the largest Muslim community in any European country — and the 40,000 French living in France's former colonies in the Maghreb.

Peace and security in the area means, to France, addressing the

Israeli question as soon as possible. Mr. Mitterrand's men put the question over the weekend: "If America emerges after this as the power in the region, will it continue to support Israel unquestioningly or will it face up to its moral obligation?"

There may be speculation that Mr. King, in his military capacity, overstated even Britain's intentions when declaring that President Saddam's forces could not be left intact because "if we left this task half completed, so we only saw the same problems re-asserted in six months or a year's time." But a Foreign Office official said that the risk of President Saddam leaving Kuwait, while having the chance to do it again was a real possibility, that the need to pursue him in Iraq was therefore justified; and that hence, the biggest fear was of a defection by the three dissenters in Security Council.

It was clear from the comments last weekend by the new Soviet Foreign Minister, Alexander Bessmertnykh, that Mos-

cov has some difficulty in seeing the destruction of Iraq as within the spirit of the U.N. resolutions. To Moscow, peace and security means something else again. That is, a Soviet diplomat said yesterday, reining in the influence of Iran to limit its influence over the Islamic population in the Soviet republics; preventing a weakening of the Arab states against Israel; and, above all, limiting the period of a post-crisis American presence in the area that would curtail Moscow's influence in the region.

It may be surprising that all the permanent five gave their blessing to Resolution 678. Yet they had no choice, the U.N. Charter states quite clearly — in chapter 7, article 42 — that the Security Council "may take such action by air, sea or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security." Granted, its authors may not have foreseen the consequences. — The Independent.

## Wartime? Just one big party

By Jocelyn Zablit and Remer Tyson

CAIRO, Egypt — Come nightfall in this city of more than 15 million people, the nightclubs and hotels spring alive — with Kuwaiti exiles.

The streets in front of nightspots grow crowded as fleets of new, chauffeur-driven Mercedes-Benzes discharge their Kuwaiti owners. Hotel elevators are shrouded with the strong smell of perfume as Kuwaiti women, many sporting fur coats, Chanel purses and gold-and-diamond jewellery, head for another evening of Cairo nightlife.

The war to liberate Kuwait may be raging in their homeland, but for many of the Kuwaitis in exile here, the party rages on.

Long among the wealthiest of the residents of the oil-rich Gulf, many of the 30,000 Kuwaitis stranded here when Iraq invaded their country are continuing to live a high life that embarrasses some Kuwaitis.

Egyptians and other Arabs have long been bitter about the ostentatious wealth of oil-rich Gulf countries, including Saudi

Arabia. But that bitterness has intensified in recent months because of what many Egyptians, with

an annual per capita income of just \$700, see as crass behaviour at a time when other countries are fighting to liberate Kuwait.

But that message has not reached everyone.

On a Thursday night, which marks the beginning of the weekend in Muslim countries, 450 energetic young men and women jammed into the hot, smoky Sultana's Disco.

They crowded onto a dance floor, their hands up in the air as they stomped and gyrated to the latest Arabic and Western tunes blasting into the early morning hours.

Some of the women wore miniskirts and tight-pants. Their makeup was generally heavy, and only one was seen wearing a head scarf. Most of the men, many with heavy gel on their hair, wore open-collared shirts and sport coats.

Most didn't want to talk about

their presence in Cairo.

One who did, Mohammad Al Issa, 27, began discussing his latest vacation activities in London, Bahrain and Cairo, where he has travelled since the Iraqi takeover of Kuwait on Aug. 2. Asked if he was going to casinos and nightclubs, Al Issa, who hasn't heard from his parents and three sisters in Kuwait since the invasion, said: "I go everywhere, everynight."

But he took a different tack when two of his friends cautioned him that what he was saying might not look good in print.

After the warning, he said he spent his time listening to the news.

Some of the Kuwaiti families still have their maids, most of them Filipinos or Bangladeshis, to do chores and look after their children.

One hotel, the Ramees Hilton, offers \$565-a-day suites complete with a private, round-the-clock butler.

Gharib Abu Al Fadl, the front desk manager at the Safrir Zamalek Suites Hotel, said the

Kuwaiti-owned hotel's 104 suites had been occupied by exiles since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Faralha Al Sabah, the Kuwaiti emir's sister, is among the guests staying at the Safir.

The Kuwaiti government spokesman pointed out that hundreds of Kuwaitis were undergoing military training by the Egyptian army and that a group of 500 left last week for Saudi Arabia to join the allied forces.

He said courses were also being offered to men and women. The men are taught electronics, plumbing and auto mechanics. The women learn sewing, household plumbing and household maintenance.

But that apparently has done little to calm Egyptians, who have taken to telling the following story: epitomise the arrogance of the rich Kuwaitis.

An Egyptian taxi driver picks up an Egyptian passenger. The driver, out of compassion, tells the Kuwaiti there is no charge for the ride. The Kuwaiti looks at him and says, "I don't need charity from a beggar." — The Mercury News.

## Gulf war of another kind grips the world

By Richard Lorant  
The Associated Press

TELEVISION viewers in Cuba watched cartoons and baseball as U.S. and allied aircraft attacked Baghdad in the early hours of the Gulf war.

But in the most of the rest of the world, that was when the news bombardment began.

Television networks from Spain to Santiago cut into their regular programming to describe the aerial attack from the Al Rashid hotel in the Iraqi capital. Newspaper from Australia to Zimbabwe rushed to put out special war editions and continue to print daily special sections on military developments.

Cable News Network, often broadcast locally with live voice-over translations, was the only source of spot news from Baghdad for much of the world that first night and is still heavily relied on for live coverage to bolster marathon news specials in dozens of countries.

The Atlanta-based network has so dominated European airwaves since Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait that Italy's state-owned

Rai network said Thursday it wants to create a 24-hour European news station to counter what it sees as CNN's American point of view.

CNN correspondent Peter Arnett, who remained in Baghdad when others were ordered to leave Jan. 19, is now a house guest in countries where most people were unaware of CNN before the war.

But Arnett is not the only foreign correspondent left in the battered city.

Alfonso Rojo, a reporter for the Madrid daily *El Mundo* who was also allowed by Iraqi authorities to remain, said in a story published Friday he has had to resort to spirituous handwritten notes out of Iraq because Arnett will not let him use the CNN satellite connection.

In some countries, officials have begun to react against the five marathons that typified the output of most TV stations in the first days of the war.

Gianni Pasquarelli, Rai general director, issued a directive Thursday asking that the Italian network dedicate extra news editions and bulletins only to "truly relevant news" and keep them

brief.

"Non-stop information is by nature non-verified information, and a type of programming that throws everything, whatever arrives, into the cauldron," Rai radio director Corrado Guerzoni said, explaining the rationale of the directives.

The government-run South African Broadcasting Corp returned to its regular programming on Monday after viewers began demanding an end to saturation war coverage.

The country's mainstream press, run by whites, has been running page one war coverage every day. But black-oriented newspapers like the Sowetan have given the war less coverage and said that many black South Africans either side with Iraq or are strongly against U.S. involvement in the region.

Also Thursday, nine main

stream conservative, centrist and socialist deputies in the French parliament said they were creating a "parliamentary observatory" of the media's war coverage.

There are more than 140 Japanese journalists and technicians in the region, more than 100 from France and 30 from China.

The Gulf war has lengthened

television broadcast hours in some countries and expanded content limits in others.

French-speaking television in Belgium, which normally stops broadcasting at 11:40 p.m., now runs all night with hourly news updates.

Mexico's Televisa Satellite News Network has indefinitely extended its late-night newscast from 30 minutes to an hour.

The state-owned Singapore Broadcasting Corporation's Radio and television stations have also expanded their hours.

Radio stations broadcasting in English, Mandarin, Malay and Tamil used to sign off at midnight. Now they offer round-the-clock updates.

Zimbabweans and foreigners gather daily in the Harare Sheraton Hotel lounge and the Hotel Inn's Snuffbox cocktail bar to watch live war reports.

In post-communist Poland, where the war competes for space with Baltic efforts for independence from the Soviet Union, the war has prompted the first appearances of military experts in newspapers and on television.

State television offers a 10-minute nightly talk show, called

"War for peace," in which two Polish air force colonels discuss developments and present the types of arms used by both sides.

State-run television in China used CNN extensively on the first day of the war. In an unprecedented move, the national evening news broke away from domestic issues Jan. 17 a few minutes after the start of the newscast to provide 10 minutes of war reports.

Cuba appears to be one of the few countries immune to live coverage. The night the war broke out, Cubans received little coverage of the war by government-controlled media.

The night of the attack, Cuban television showed excerpts of a news conference by President Fidel Castro in which he lamented the outbreak of war and said it could have been prevented by further negotiations. But he devoted most of his time to the upcoming Pan American games.

Cuba, one of two members of the U.N. Security Council which repeatedly held out against anti-Iraq resolutions, has a massive contingent of more than 200 people in Iraq.

## This war is not about Kuwait, so Arabs can support Iraq without guilt

By Safwan Bataineh

TO ALL those Arabs who have suffered a wrenching moral dilemma ever since American troops massed in the Arabian desert, and American planes started mercilessly bombing Iraq, I say: do not feel guilty about siding with Iraq. The struggle taking place now is larger than Kuwait and even Iraq itself. It has become, in an irrational and roundabout, but nevertheless a clear manner, your own struggle.

Not that the occupation and annexation of Kuwait is right. It is not. But you must stop whispering your angry condemnations, set aside your hackneyed platitudes, and get off that shaky fence. For the predicament of your Kuwaiti brothers must not blind you from perceiving the greater risks and pains that shall befall the Arab nation should Iraq be destroyed or humiliated.

The rational arguments for condemning and keeping Iraq at bay have become all too familiar and jaded. They have been whispered in melancholic and wistful tones by the conscientious, and cynically shouted by the treacherous, seeking to mask their treachery, dishonesty, and malignant hatred.

But sigh no more, Arabs, sigh no more, the ex-colonialists were deceivers ever.

The defeat of Iraq will be a defeat for all Arabs. It will be so in the eyes of the ever-hostile West; in the eyes of the world; and most importantly, in the eyes of your forsaken children. It will be the final triumph of the Western and Zionist old designs to divide, emaciate, and forever subjugate the Arab World.

The consequences are plain to see and are openly planned for: the economic emasculation of the Arabs as oil prices drop to the floor and remaining wealth is bled away to finance

## 14,000 Palestinians detained

### Amnesty calls for U.N. intervention in Israeli-occupied Arab territories

FOR OVER three years now Amnesty International has been expressing its concerns about a pattern of serious and widespread human rights violations in the Israeli occupied territories. These include large scale use of detention without trial, systematic ill-treatment and the killing of civilians by Israeli forces. Amnesty International deeply regrets that such violations continue, affecting thousands of people, and that the Israeli Government has been unwilling to take urgently needed measures of redress.

Some 14,000 Palestinians, including prisoners of conscience, have been held in administrative detention without charge or trial since December 1987. Over 4,000 were detained during 1990 for renewable periods of up to one year, the vast majority in the Ketziot detention camp in Israel, where visits by families do not take place. Although a two-step process of judicial review of detention orders is available, detainees are effectively unable to exercise the right to challenge their detention, as crucial information about the reasons for the detention is almost invariably withheld. The Israeli authorities often refer to the need to protect sources of information to justify such practices.

Amnesty International has repeatedly called on the Israeli authorities to review the necessity and appropriateness of maintaining the practice of administrative detention. It believes that this practice should not be used to detain prisoners of conscience nor should it be used as a means to avoid the safeguards of a regular criminal justice system. It continues to call all detained prisoners of conscience to be released immediately and unconditionally, and for the other political detainees to be released unless they are given an adequate opportunity to exercise effectively the right to challenge their detention. Amnesty International does not accept in this context that details of the evidence against each detainee cannot be disclosed more often.

Thousands of Palestinians have been tried by military courts in the occupied territories, most charged with violent offences such as throwing stones or petrol bombs. After arrest, they can be held for 18 days before appearing before a judge. Many are denied access to lawyers and families for much longer periods. Confessions allegedly extracted during incommunicado detention are often the primary evidence. Those who plead not guilty face delays which could postpone trials for months and sometimes years. If convicted they face heavier sentences than those who choose to plead guilty. Bail is rarely granted and many plead guilty in order to avoid periods of pre-trial detention which would exceed likely sentences.

The systematic use of ill-treatment during interrogation continues to be widespread. Palestinians have also been tortured to obtain confessions or other information. Methods include beatings with truncheons and rifle butts on various parts of the body; hooding with dirty sacks; sleep deprivation by pro-

longed shackling in uncomfortable positions; confinement in small darkened cells often referred to as "closets"; burning with cigarettes; squeezing of testicles; and sexual harassment.

At least some such methods may be consistent with secret guidelines issued in 1987 by a commission of inquiry into the methods of investigation of the General Security Service. The commission, chaired by Justice Moshe Landau, endorsed "the exertion of a moderate measure of physical pressure" during interrogation. Amnesty International believes that any official suggestion that such treatment is permissible clearly departs from international law and accepted standards for criminal law. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments prohibit all forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment under any circumstances.

Many Palestinians have been punitively beaten immediately after being apprehended. At least 16 are reported to have died after such beatings since December 1987.

Palestinians are reported to have died after tear-gas had apparently been deliberately misused in confined spaces where it can be lethal. Since December 1987 some 80 Palestinians, many elderly or very young, are reported to have died after having been exposed to tear-gas, about half after canisters were thrown into their homes or other confined places.

Since December 1987, some 700 Palestinian civilians, including many children and young people, have been shot dead by Israeli forces using live ammunition and special types of plastic and other bullets. Some appear to have been deliberately killed, others to have been the victims of a use of lethal force in circumstances where this cannot be justified. Israeli forces continue to use firearms as a common means of riot control, under official guidelines which appear to be inconsistent with the internationally recognised principles of necessity and proportionality in the use of force.

In October 1990 at least 17 Palestinians were shot dead by police at the Haram Al-Sharif (Temple Mount) in Jerusalem in the context of a riot. An official commission of investigation, headed by a former head of external intelligence, found that the shootings were justified by a life-threatening situation, although it also established that at some point firing was indiscriminate and that an ambulance attending the wounded was hit, injuring two nurses. Reports from local human rights groups and other sources suggested that many of the victims died as a result of indiscriminate and unjustifiable use of firearms. A judicial inquiry into the killings is currently taking place. Amnesty International has called for an independent and impartial judicial inquiry to investigate the incident and to review official guidelines on opening fire and methods of riot control.

Official investigations into

abuses by Israeli forces are mostly conducted internally and take a long time to conclude. Despite the high incidence of apparently unjustifiable deaths since December 1987, Amnesty International is aware of only two prosecutions leading to imprisonment in cases of deaths following punitive beatings, and of five in cases of deaths by shootings. In 1990 one soldier was sentenced to two months' actual imprisonment and three received suspended sentences of up to five months for having beaten two Palestinians in their custody in February 1988. One of the victims died after the assault. Also in 1990 one soldier was sentenced to four months of "unpleasant" work at a military base for having shot dead in June 1988 a Palestinian who was apparently fleeing arrest. Just three weeks ago a senior commander was given a suspended sentence of six months' imprisonment and a reprimand for having shot dead a Palestinian youth in July 1989.

The existing guidelines on the use of force, combined with the pattern of related abuses and the inadequacy of official investigations, all leads Amnesty International to conclude that the Israeli authorities are effectively condoning, if not encouraging, the perpetration of these human rights violations.

Amnesty International is aware that Palestinian methods of protest in the occupied territories have included violence, and that a number of soldiers and civilians have died as a result. Among the victims are some 300 Palestinians apparently killed by other Palestinians, the vast majority on suspicion of collaborating with the Israeli authorities. Some were killed after having been interrogated and tortured. Amnesty International stresses once again that it condemns torture and killings of prisoners by anyone. At the same time, it calls on the Israeli Government fully to abide by international human rights standards in exercising its authority over the Occupied Territories.

In particular, the Israeli authorities should urgently review existing guidelines on the use of force, including firearms and methods of interrogation, to ensure that they strictly comply with the Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials and the Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials. Amnesty International also believes that speedy, impartial and public investigations, as well as appropriate prosecutions, are needed if doubts about the Israeli Government's willingness to protect human rights are to be removed.

The Government of Israel is already a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Amnesty International urges the Government to make a binding commitment to uphold these standards by ratifying these instruments and by taking all other measures that are urgently required to redress the continuing situation of grave human rights violations in the Occupied Territories.

### U.S. planes

(Continued from page 1)

Iraqi Radio that the allies had reported attacks on residential areas.

"The usurpers of the Arab land, the desecrators of its sanctities, and the looters of its wealth find no means to confront Iraq's courageous challenge and its valiant armed forces," the broadcast statement said.

"There have been 18 of these cowardly raids on these areas," it said.

Iraq's ruling Al Baath party newspaper said Saturday that the daily allied bombing of the country had failed to "break the will and capabilities of Iraq... the aggressors known now that the idea of a short war to strip Iraq of its power has failed."

Iraqi columns struck across the border from Kuwait into Saudi Arabia last Tuesday night and Wednesday, seized the abandoned town of Khafji and held it until Thursday.

Neither Iraq nor the United States and its allies have reported major engagements on the ground since Thursday night.

The Iranian news agency IRNA said Iraq's opponents launched new bomb and missile attacks on the Iraqi port city of Basra and other parts of southern Iraq Saturday, with two huge blasts rocking Basra.

A U.S. military spokesman also said air attacks have virtually eliminated the threat of missile attack by Iraqi patrol boats.

Reporting four engagements on Friday night and early Saturday in which U.S. aircraft hit Iraqi patrol boats, the spokesman said a total of 31 craft had now been put out of action.

"We have destroyed practically all patrol craft that were capable of delivering missiles," he said. "It may be they have only one or two left."

France said its planes attacked near Iraq's border with Kuwait.

The French defence ministry said two of the raids were, as in

previous days, against artillery and mechanised units of Iraq's elite Republican Guard. A third strike was against a munitions Depot 30 kilometres south of Kuwait City.

A British military spokesman said Iraqi troops in Kuwait continued to move around but there was no sign of them preparing a new assault.

In other developments: France gave permission Friday for U.S. B-52 bombers based in Britain to fly over French territory on bombing missions to the Gulf, the French Ministry announced.

The U.S. bombers flying over France can carry only conventional arms and may not strike civilian targets or religious sites in Iraq, the ministry said in a communiqué.

"When we speak of non-conventional arms, we're essentially meaning nuclear, chemical and radiological arms," a ministry spokesman said.

B-52 carry either conventional

bombs or cruise missiles. The missiles can be tipped with conventional or nuclear warheads. The ministry spokesman said conventionally armed missiles would probably be permitted under the accord.

The government has agreed to allow a Pakistani charity to send medicine and 2,000 points (950 litres) of blood to help war victims in Iraq, the organisation's leader said Saturday.

"Muslims are dying and we want to help. The government says we can send this," said Abdul Sattar Edhi, head of the Karachi-based Edhi Welfare Trust.

Edhi said the medicine and blood would be sent to Iraq through the Saudi Red Crescent.

He said the charity also had wanted to send milk and baby food to Baghdad but was denied permission.

Egyptian authorities have ordered a Gulf-bound ship to unload explosives from its cargo before entering the Suez Canal.

Shipping sources said owners of the 15,125-ton Oatari-registered Fatihukhair were told that 109 tonnes of high explosive mines could be sent overland and reloaded at the Red Sea end of the canal. Two Iraqi crew members were also told to travel by land.

A French television reporter said on Saturday U.S. soldiers had threatened French journalists with machine guns when they attempted to film in the Saudi town of Khafji after it was taken by allied troops.

Nearly 400 refugees fleeing the Gulf war have crossed into Iran from Iraq in the past two days, IRNA reported.

It said 360 nationals of India, Sudan, Somalia and the Philippines were housed in temporary camps after arriving at Khorasani, a main crossing 720 km west of Tehran.

Eight Kuwaitis and 15 Iranians crossed through the Shalamch border in the south, IRNA added.

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Troisième semaine de guerre

## Les premiers combats terrestres

L'offensive surprise lancée mardi soir par plusieurs milliers de soldats irakiens contre la ville saoudienne de Khafji a été «entièvement repoussée» jendi selon l'état-major de la coalition anti-irakienne, mais des poches de résistance subsistent le long de la frontière koweïto-saoudienne. Les Irakiens ont annoncé qu'à eux vendredi soir qu'ils «se retireraient» de la ville de Khafji.

Une certaine confusion régnait cependant, hier encore, autour du bilan de cette première bataille terrestre de la guerre du Golfe. Après un bilan publié par l'agence soviétique Interfax faisant état de 1.500 morts irakiens et un bilan britannique parlant de 300 soldats irakiens tués, les Britanniques révoyaient vendredi soir ce chiffre à la baisse en n'annonçant

plus que 30 morts. Chiffre confirmé l'Arabie Saoudite qui ajoute que 400 soldats irakiens auraient été faits prisonniers. Il semble également qu'à la suite d'une bavure, l'US Air-force ait tiré sur une de ses propres divisions, causant la mort de 11 marines.

La semaine a également été marquée par l'atterrissement de près de cent appareils irakiens, civils et militaires, en Iran selon le Pentagone. Mais l'Iran, qui n'a reconnu l'atterrissement que de 16 appareils, a assuré qu'ils ne pourraient pas quitter son territoire avant la fin du conflit, tout en précisant que sa position sur ce point pourrait changer en cas d'offensive israélienne. L'Iran n'a par ailleurs jamais indiqué ce qu'il comptait faire des pilotes et des équipages de ces

avions irakiens. Selon le ministre israélien de la Défense, Moshe Arens, tous les chasseurs bombardiers irakiens Sukhoi-24 seraient passés en Iran, ce qui représente 20 à 25 avions. Cela signifie selon lui que l'Iran «tente de mettre à l'abri tous ses appareils de qualité hors de son territoire». Les autres hypothèses avancées jusqu'à présent—défection, fuite devant les appareils de la coalition anti-irakienne, ou encore «provocation» pour entraîner l'Iran dans la guerre—semblent de moins en moins plausibles aux analystes militaires américains qui privilient la thèse israélienne. Restent les interrogations sur l'attitude des Iraniens dans cette affaire. Téhéran a officiellement décidé de saisir ces avions jusqu'à la fin de la guerre et a assuré les Etats-Unis, par l'intermédiaire de la Suisse et de son ambassadeur à l'ONU, qu'il entendait rester neutre. Dans une interview accordée à CNN, Saddam Hussein a affirmé qu'il

est naturel que les avions irakiens se posent en Iran puisque les deux pays voient dans la guerre «une bataille entre la foi et l'infidèle». Interrogé sur une possible réutilisation de ces avions, il a affirmé que «chaque cas dépendait de circonstances particulières». Téhéran est de ce fait, depuis jeudi, le théâtre d'une intense activité diplomatique. Pour la première fois depuis le début de l'offensive de la coalition contre l'Irak, une importante délégation irakienne conduite par le ministre délégué aux Affaires Etrangères, Saadoun Hammadi, est arrivée jendi après-midi à Téhéran, avec un message du président Saddam Hussein «sur les relations bilatérales et la guerre du Golfe». Le secrétaire général du ministère français des Affaires Etrangères, François Scheer, le chef de la diplomatie algérienne Sid Ahmed Ghozali et une délégation du Yémen se sont également rendus à Téhéran.

Après une accalmie de

trois jours, l'Irak a repris jeudi ses tirs de missiles SCUD en direction d'Israël. Mais comme cela avait été le cas lundi dernier, le missile irakien à ogive conventionnelle est retombé sur la Cisjordanie occupée sans faire de victime selon le porte-parole de l'armée israélienne.

Pour la première fois depuis la création de l'Etat d'Israël, l'Allemagne a organisé à partir de jeudi soir un pont aérien afin de fournir du matériel militaire à l'Etat hébreu, notamment des blindés ultra sophistiqués, des équipements de protection contre les gaz et une batterie de missiles anti-missiles américains Patriot.

Pour la première fois également depuis le déclenchement de la guerre, l'OLP a annoncé avoir tiré mardi à l'aube 80 roquettes sol-sol de type Grad en direction des localités de Metoulla, Miskav Am, Kafir Jalaadine et Nahariya, dans le nord d'Israël. Selon une source militaire israélienne ces roquettes se sont abattues sur la zone

Agences

## LA SEMAINE...

de Suleiman Sweiss

### Bienfaits de la guerre

Les méfaits de la guerre sont connus de tous. La mort et la destruction n'en sont que deux échantillons parmi d'autres. Il y a de bien pires: le déracinement d'un peuple de sa terre, par exemple, tel que commis par le sionisme envers le peuple palestinien depuis 1948. De tels drames peuvent être la source de guerres interminables.

Les bienfaits de la guerre? Je n'entends pas par là évoquer des perspectives de reconstruction ou de renouvellement d'un pays, ni le regain des activités économiques et des investissements après la guerre. Cela n'empêche pourtant pas certains d'envisager déjà des formules du type «plan Marshall» à l'issue de cette guerre qui ne fait que commencer. Non, les bienfaits auxquels je pense sont tout à fait différents: ils sont politiques et suscitent l'attribution la plus part du temps.

Tout d'abord, la trahison apparue au grand jour de certains régimes arabes, tels que l'Arabie Saoudite, l'Egypte ou la Syrie, a abrégé des années de lutte politique au sein du monde arabe. Depuis longtemps déjà, des mouvements politiques prônaient la lutte contre ces régimes réactionnaires et excluaient tout compromis avec eux, qu'ils considéraient comme des valets de l'imperialisme américain. Les années n'ont fait que confirmer—aux yeux des larges masses arabes—les thèses des militants révolutionnaires arabes des années 1960-70. L'expérience s'enrichit et la conscience s'approfondit dans le vécu. Ce que nous, peuples arabes, voyons à Hafir el-Baten (base des troupes de la coalition en Arabie) est scandaleux mais riche d'enseignements pour le présent comme pour l'avenir. Sans la participation des armées saoudienne, égyptienne et syrienne à cette guerre aux côtés des «Alliés», il aurait fallu plus de temps pour démontrer le danger représenté par ces «faux» arabes.

Le deuxième «bienfait» est que cette guerre a aussi dévoilé les faux-frères musulmans, tels que M. Ozal en Turquie. Les Arabes, tout au long de leur histoire, n'ont jamais fait le moindre mal aux Turcs. On ne peut pas en dire autant en sens inverse! Il y a un an encore, le gouvernement turc stoppait l'écoulement de l'Euphrate vers la Syrie et l'Irak pendant un mois pour remplir le grand barrage «Ataturk» de l'eau vitale pour l'économie turque. Pourtant, ce même gouvernement permet aujourd'hui aux Américains de bombarder l'Irak depuis une base installée en Turquie. Nous laissons au peuple turc le soin de vérifier si une telle politique et un tel comportement sont conformes à la fraternité islamique.

Enfin, l'Occident s'est fait le champion depuis quelques mois d'une duplicité jamais égalée, en particulier après le bombardement des Israéliens par les missiles irakiens. Tôt à coup, Israël est devenu l'agneau innocent qu'il faut armer jusqu'aux dents, auquel on donne son argent, son affection et qu'on honore de visites des chancelleries en signe de solidarité. Un conférence faisait remarquer il y a quelques jours que les peuples arabes n'ont jamais rien vu de cette sympathie lors des bombardements de leurs maisons par l'armée israélienne en 1967 et les années suivantes. Mais ce n'est pas là la seule forme de duplicité de l'Occident. La liste en est déjà longue. En cette fin de siècle qui a connu le plus grand progrès matériel, il s'avère que l'Occident, qui a contribué principalement à ce progrès, ne respecte toujours pas ses propres principes en matière de droits humains.

Il est peut-être cynique de parler des bienfaits de la guerre deux semaines après son déclenchement, au moment où l'avenir de la région est encore en suspens.

Depuis quelque temps, une opinion s'est répandue assez largement: la guerre ne vise pas, sur le terrain, la libération du Koweït, mais la destruction de l'Irak. C'est une déviation manifeste par rapport au texte de la résolution de l'ONU. Parallèlement, il semble que les forces coalisées hésitent à déclencher leur offensive terrestre, par peur de trop lourdes pertes.

Dans ce cas, n'est-il pas temps de réunir le Conseil de Sécurité pour adopter une nouvelle résolution et de revenir sur le recours à la force, dont il a été fait usage sans résultat pendant deux semaines.

Une initiative dans ce sens pourrait permettre à la région et au monde d'éviter de nouveaux drames. Car si les «Alliés» persistent dans leur guerre, le processus de polarisation dont a parlé le roi Hussein la semaine passée ne peut que s'aggraver, et il faudra des décennies pour combler le fossé ainsi creusé entre les peuples d'Orient et les peuples d'Occident.



## Semaine de guerre

peu de sagesse».

### JEUDI

—Téhéran dément des informations de presse selon lesquelles un des avions de transport irakiens ayant atterri en Iran aurait été autorisé à regagner l'Irak.

—Une source militaire américaine annonce que deux soldats américains—dont une femme—d'une unité de transport qui n'a pas été engagée dans les combats sont portés disparus dans le nord-est de l'Arabie Saoudite. Les Irakiens disent les avoir capturés.

—L'attaque irakienne sur Khafji a été repoussée selon le commandement central américain à Riyad.

—Un avion américain de type C-130 avec une vingtaine de militaires à bord a disparu derrière les lignes irakiennes. Une opération est lancée pour localiser et récupérer l'équipage de cet avion.

### VENDREDI

—Nouveaux «tirs de roquettes» pour le cinquième jour consécutif contre le nord d'Israël depuis la «zone de sécurité» israélienne au Liban sud revendiquée par la résistance palestinienne.

—Bavure de l'aviation américaine en Arabie Saoudite: 11 marines sont tués dans le bombardement d'une de leurs divisions par l'US-Airforce, selon le département d'Etat américain.

—La France autorise le survol de son territoire par les bombardiers américains B-52 que la Grande-Bretagne a autorisé la veille à partir de ses bases pour aller bombardier l'Irak. Paris précise que ce feu vert exclut des appareils équipés d'armement non conventionnel.

### SAMEDI

—Les Américains affirment que l'offensive irakienne contre l'Arabie Saoudite n'aura aucun effet sur le déroulement des opérations militaires de la coalition et ne précipitera pas l'engagement du conflit terrestre.

—La Grande-Bretagne ramène le bilan des combats de Khafji à 30 soldats irakiens tués, contre les 500 qu'elle avait annoncés la veille. Ce deuxième bilan est confirmé par l'Arabie Saoudite qui fait état par ailleurs de 400 prisonniers irakiens.

S.K.

## Lettre au président français

français

Signée par soixante-dix anciens élèves jordaniens des écoles ou universités françaises, la lettre que nous publions ci-dessous a été adressée la semaine passée au président de la République française, François Mitterrand, par l'intermédiaire de l'ambassade de France à Amman.

Monsieur le Président,

Nous, signataires de cet appel, diplômés des universités et écoles françaises, exprimons notre étonnement de la participation de la France à l'agression que les Etats-Unis mènent contre l'Irak et son peuple.

Nous aurions espéré que la France, pays qui se considère au sein du monde arabe, soit en dehors de cette guerre contraire à ses principes traditionnels de Liberté, d'Égalité, de Fraternité et de Justice.

Nous pensons que cette agression vise à détruire ce pays arabe sous prétexte d'appliquer les résolutions du Conseil de Sécurité de l'ONU.

Nous demandons au gouvernement français de procéder à un arrêt immédiat de la guerre et au rétablissement du dialogue constructif en vue d'instaurer une paix juste et durable au Proche-Orient en tenant compte de toutes les résolutions de l'Organisation des Nations-Unies concernant l'ensemble des problèmes de la région, notamment la question palestinienne.

Nous rappelons que toute solution négociée doit prendre en considération l'élimination de toutes les armes chimiques et nucléaires dans tous les pays de la région et en premier lieu l'Irak dont l'arsenal nucléaire suscite la plus vive inquiétude et représente le plus grand péril.

Nous croyons profondément que l'engagement militaire français dans cette guerre destructrice portera un coup dur à l'amitié arabo-française. C'est pourquoi nous attendons à ce que la France reprenne ses initiatives diplomatiques dans l'espoir de parvenir à un règlement pacifique de la crise.

Nous nous joignons aux forces de la Paix en France et en Europe et nous souhaitons que notre voix soit entendue.

Amman, le 27 janvier 1991



Jean-Pierre Chevènement a rendu son tablier de ministre français de la Défense.

## Dernière édition du «Jourdain»

En raison des circonstances particulières que traversent actuellement la Jordanie et la région, la Fondation de la Presse Jordaniennes (Al-Rai-Jordan Times) n'est plus en mesure de poursuivre la publication de son supplément hebdomadaire en français, Le Jourdain, au sein du Jordan Times.

Cette édition est donc la dernière des pages en français, qui sont publiées depuis le mois d'octobre 1988.

Le Jourdain remercie tous ses fidèles lecteurs pour leur soutien et leurs encouragements tout au long de cette période, et espère pouvoir repartir en de meilleures circonstances.

Tout courrier peut être adressé désormais à l'éditeur de ce supplément:

Jean-Marc Bordes  
PO Box 35.287  
AMMAN

## EN BREF

Accusation. Le ministre jordanien des Affaires Etrangères, Taher al-Masri, a accusé l'avion allié d'attaquer des civils et d'avoir tué, mardi et mercredi, quatre Jordaniens à l'intérieur du territoire irakien alors qu'ils étaient en route pour leur pays. Le porte-parole du département d'Etat, Margaret Tutwiler, a indiqué de son côté que les Etats-Unis regrettent profondément la mort de quelque civil que ce soit, tout en rappelant que la région dans laquelle se trouvaient ces véhicules était zone de guerre et qu'elle connoterait à être extrêmement dangereuse, compte tenu de la poursuite de la campagne contre les SCUD.

Essence. Le gouvernement jordanien a décidé de restreindre la circulation en Jordanie en organisant l'usage des voitures privées sur la base d'un jour sur deux afin d'économiser l'énergie. Les voitures privées munies de plaques d'immatriculation portant des numéros impairs rouleront les jours impairs, tandis que les voitures munies de plaques portant des numéros pairs rouleront les jours pairs. Les taxis et autres véhicules de service public ne sont pas concernés par ces mesures. Les restrictions seront appliquées à partir de mercredi prochain et les voitures qui ne s'y conformeront pas seront confisquées.

Réfugiés. Les réfugiés fuyant les bombardements des forces de la coalition sur l'Irak affluent de plus en plus nombreux dans les camps installés à leur intention dans les pays frontaliers de l'Irak. En Jordanie, plusieurs milliers de réfugiants égyptiens et quelques soudanais qui étaient bloqués depuis une semaine au poste frontière irakien de Trebil ont commencé mercredi matin à entrer en Jordanie par le poste de Ruweisah. La Syrie, dont les frontières avec l'Irak sont fermées depuis 1982, a indiqué qu'elle était prête à les ouvrir pour des «raisons humanitaires» à toute personne fuyant l'Irak, y compris des Irakiens. Au total, plus de 2.500 étrangers se sont rendus en Iran par le poste de Khosravi:

Attentats. Environ 70 attaques terroristes ont été menées contre les membres de la coalition anti-irakienne depuis le début des hostilités le 17 janvier dans de nombreux pays. En Jordanie, la British Bank of Middle East et le Centre Culturel Français ont été attaqués cette semaine. Des agresseurs dont on ignore le nombre ont aspergé d'essence la bibliothèque du CCF et y ont placé une bombe de gaz avant d'y mettre le feu. L'attentat, revendiqué à l'AFP par l'Organisation des Brigades du Jihad, inconnue à ce jour, a mis à l'écart le premier étage du centre mais n'a fait aucune victime.

Victoire. Le président sud-africain Frederik de Klerk a annoncé vendredi le glas de l'apartheid en abolissant deux des trois piliers juridiques de ce système raciste. Le premier (Group Acts) divise les zones urbaines en fonction de la race, les villes proprement dites étant réservées aux blancs. Le second pilier se compose de deux lois (Land Acts) qui réservait 87% du territoire à la minorité blanche. Ne reste que la loi sur la classification de la population, qui divise les Sud-Africains à la naissance en fonction de leur couleur de peau et conditionne leur existence (notamment sur le plan de l'éducation, encore organisée sur des bases racistes).

Somalie. La Somalie a changé de président mardi lorsque le Congrès de la Somalie Uoifée (USC), maître de Mogadiscio depuis dimanche dernier a désigné Ali Mahdi Mohamed pour succéder à la présidence de la République à Mohamed Siad Barre qui a pris la fuite pendant le week-end.

Séisme. Un violent tremblement de terre a secoué le Pakistan vendredi matin provoquant la mort d'au moins 175 personnes et blessant plusieurs centaines. Ce séisme dont l'épicentre se situait au nord-ouest de Peshawar a atteint une magnitude de 6,8 sur l'échelle de Richter et a été ressenti jusqu'en Afghanistan, en Inde et en Asie centrale soviétique. Cette magnitude est généralement considérée comme importante et susceptible de causer de nombreux dégâts dans les zones peuplées, dans un large rayon autour de l'épicentre.

Accident. Un Boeing 737 de la compagnie intérieure US-Air qui s'apprêtait à se poser vendredi soir sur l'aéroport de Los Angeles a heurté un avion taxi provoquant la mort de 15 personnes et faisant 25 blessés. 29 passagers des deux appareils étaient encore portés disparus hier en début d'après-midi.

Tennis. L'Allemand Boris Becker est devenu, à 23 ans, le nouveau numéro un mondial du tennis masculin cette semaine à Melbourne, en remportant la finale des Internationaux d'Australie face au Tchèque Ivan Lendl. Il succède ainsi au Suédois Stefan Edberg qui avait détrôné Lendl à la faveur de son succès à Wimbledon l'année dernière.

Chevènement. Le ministre français de la Défense, Jean-Pierre Chevènement a démissionné mardi de ses fonctions. Ses réticences à l'égard du conflit du Golfe étaient connues. «La logique de guerre risque de nous éloigner chaque jour des objectifs fixés par les Nations-Unies», a écrit M. Chevènement dans la lettre qu

Braderie planétaire

## La dignité pour quelques dollars

Décidément, la crise du Golfe, devenue guerre du Golfe, nous fait découvrir, au fil des jours, des réalités insoupçonnables.

Ainsi, tout s'enchaîne: pour être diplomate, il faut être poli; ou —partant du fait que la politesse est une forme d'hypocrisie—, les politiciens de ce monde qu'ils mènent à la catastrophe font de l'hypocrisie leur règle de conduite. Ils ont réussi à concilier, entre autres, —par un entrelacs inextricable de communiqués, d'interviews et autres conférences de presse, en utilisant des termes univoques— des théorèmes démontables avec des postulats incontournables.

En préchant la dissociation du problème du Moyen-Orient de celui du Koweït supposé être la cause directe du conflit, on nous a fait entrer de plain-pied dans cette tourmente apocalyptique, et malgré ce lien irrécusable, les Américains, par des manœuvres dilatoires, nous ont donné une leçon magistrale de l'art des tournées politiques. Pendant une semaine, ils se sont ingénier à repousser, jour après jour, une résolution affectant à leurs yeux les intérêts d'Israël, alors que, dans la même période, ils réussissaient le tour de force de faire voter une dizaine de mesures à l'encontre de l'Irak! Et c'est à la fin de cette fameuse semaine que j'ai presque ressenti la honte d'être arabe. Car c'était l'unique opportunité pour les Arabes de prendre des dispositions unilatérales, des décisions fermes et irréversibles, de faire éclater cette coalition contre nature envers un autre pays arabe, de déclarer qu'à un problème arabe il fallait une solution arabe, et qu'au-delà de toute considération éthique ou ethnique, on ne peut conceder le droit de parer de guerre qu'à un seul pays arabe: le Koweït.

Mais hélas, mille fois hélas, où est la Nation arabe? Où est l'unité arabe? «Comment en un vil plomb, l'or pur s'est-il changé?» (Racine).

Pour une poignée de dollars, les Etats-Unis d'Amérique ont acheté la dignité, la conscience et la valeur morale d'un peuple au passé trois fois millénaire, vendus à une Amérique qui faisait il y a à peine cent ans, le 29 décembre 1890, exterminer par ses tuniques bleues 300 Indiens dans l'espace de quelques minutes. Le président Bush «pardonne sa dette à l'Egypte», comme s'il s'agissait d'un blasphème.

Pour une poignée de dollars, assortie d'une promesse évasive de relations commerciales bilatérales et l'assurance d'une amnésie éhronique sur certains agissements terroristes, l'oncle Sam s'achète des lieux indéfendables avec la Syrie.

Le comique cotoie le tragique. La Turquie multiplie les courbatures pour acheter une treizième place dans l'Europe des Douze. Elle va même jusqu'à offrir gracieusement une base aérienne militaire aux forces alliées pour qu'elles puissent bombarder l'Irak, oubliant qu'elle recevait de cet Irak-même des millions de dollars pour les pipe-lines qui traversent son territoire. Tout le monde est atteint de perte de mémoire aggravée: Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Berlin, c'est le passé lointain.

Emboitant le pas à ces «achats» et «ventes», tous azimuts, c'est alors une folle farandole, une envolée irrépressible de dollars à travers le monde...

L'Arabie Saoudite cautionne la politique de l'URSS avec 400 millions de dollars, alors même que les relations diplomatiques entre ces deux pays sont inexistantes, tandis que le Koweït se prémérit de verser des sommes inimaginables à la Chine pour acheter son veto à l'ONU. De la folie! L'Irak n'en demandait pas tant!

Une braderie à l'échelle planétaire. On liquide, on solde, comme on sème à tous vents et à bas prix, l'Honneur, la Dignité, la Morale, la Vertu, la Conscience, le Passé, le Présent et même l'Avenir.

«La manie du rabaissement est la lèpre morale de notre époque», écrivait Flaubert.

Les Arabes ont été depuis longtemps et sont toujours en tête des peuples rabâssés et il faudrait être d'une naïveté extrême pour croire à cet amour subit et incontrôlable que les Etats-Unis et leurs alliés semblent soudainement éprouver à leur égard. Au fil des jours, on s'aperçoit avec amertume que le Koweït est oublié et que seule la destruction de l'Irak compte. Même la France, dont l'ex-ministre de la Défense, Jean-Pierre Chevénement, est président de l'Association d'amitié franco-irakienne et qui avait promis de ne jamais intervenir en Irak, a failli à sa parole. Terre d'art et de culture, de liberté et de démocratie, elle vient de faire exploser, au rythme de ses bombes, cette devise qui fait d'elle la France: «Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité».

Depuis le début de la crise, les ballets diplomatiques orchestrés par les Etats-Unis n'avaient qu'un objectif précis: complexifier le problème pour ne laisser entrevoir qu'une seule issue possible: l'intervention armée.

On s'étonnait, en effet, d'entendre le président américain son secrétaire d'Etat répéter à l'envi et comme un leitmotiv: «pas de compromis, pas de concessions, pas question pour l'Irak de sauver la face». Ils auraient dû ajouter pour compléter le chapelet de négatifs: «pas de discussion». Ainsi, tout le monde aurait compris. Mais personne ne voulait comprendre ce qui pourtant était aussi clair que de l'eau de roche: les Américains, les Anglais, et bientôt les Israéliens, voulaient purement et simplement détruire complètement le potentiel militaire irakien et, dans la foulée, écraser cet Etat arabe qui se permettait des velléités de modernisation.

Seul Saddam Hussein savait cela, tout comme il savait que la position du président Bush était dictée par deux principes fondamentaux et inébranlables. Premièrement: assurer à Israël, outre sa sécurité, une domination totale —militairement parlant— sur le monde arabe, ainsi qu'un rôle de partenaire et de gendarme dans la région. Deuxièmement: s'assurer la mainmise sur les ressources pétrolières du Golfe. Sur ce point précis, M. Bush —milliardaire grâce à ses puits de pétrole au Texas— est bien placé pour savoir que c'est grâce au pétrole qu'il s'est retrouvé propulsé au sommet de la statue de la Liberté, ce qui lui permet de regarder le monde de haut.

Les deux chocs pétroliers et leurs conséquences économiques catastrophiques ne sont pas près d'être oubliés. Comme ne peut être occultée la grande puissance économique de l'Europe des Douze, particulièrement après l'unification des deux Allemagne. Ajoutez à cette force naissante, celle inquiétante du Japon, et il n'est pas besoin d'avoir fait Sciences-Po pour comprendre que celui qui contrôlera le pétrole du Golfe contrôlera également le reste du monde. M. Bush le sait. Il est à l'Arabie Saoudite et n'en repartira jamais. Il y est; il y reste. Il ne pouvait pas laisser ce lever —qui pouvait faire basculer le globe— entre les

mains d'un Arabe.

Partant de ces raisonnements, un seul but est recherché: la victoire. Et l'on franchit allègrement la dernière marche de l'escalier qui mène à l'enfer. On bombarde l'Irak, presque joyeusement, à qui mieux mieux, dans une atmosphère d'Arbres de Noël. C'est une affaire d'heures. On se rappelle avec vantardise d'une autre guerre, dans la même région, qui n'avait duré que six jours. On fera mieux cette fois-ci: ce sera six heures, pas plus, c'est planifié sur ordinateur géant.

Après trois jours de bombardements intensifs, désespérant de ne plus trouver d'objectifs militaires, on largue ses bombes n'importe où, sur des usines de lait pour enfants. Du lait biologique au lait chimique, qu'en sait-on? On lâche ses bombes sur des mosquées dont les minarets deviennent des lance-missiles —tout est possible en enfer. On jette ses bombes là où l'on veut, histoire de ne pas rentrer bredouille de la chasse, et de ne pas subir les quolibets des copains au retour.

Et soudain, ô rage, ô désespoir, Saddam Hussein a de des prisonniers américains et autres! Est-ce possible? On se réveille, on crie au crime, on invoque la convention de Genève, on parle de Lois internationales, on se rappelle brusquement des Droits de l'Homme. «L'Homme est un apprivoisé, la douleur est son maître, et nul ne se connaît tant qu'il n'a pas souffert», disait Mussert.

Pendant vingt-trois ans, dans les territoires occupés par Israël, les Droits, les Lois, les Conventions, les Résolutions, etc... ont été bafoués, foulés aux pieds, ignorés par l'entité sioniste. Je recommanderais à M. Bush de se faire projeter quelques cassettes vidéo avant d'aller se coucher: celles particulièrement horribles de soldats juifs brisant les bras et les omoplates de jeunes Palestiniens avec de grosses pierres, ou celles de bébés de moins de 1 an, le crâne fracassé par les balles, gisant lamentablement entre les bras de leur mère désespérée et sans défense. Après ces projections, je souhaite à M. Bush de passer, dans sa Maison Blanche, une nuit... de la même couleur.

Ô est Genève, avec ses salles de conférences tapissées de rouge! Pendant 23 ans, Israël, soutenu par les Etats-Unis, a ignoré totalement l'idée même de Nations-Unies et ce qu'elles représentent. Il n'est pas concerné.

M. Bush, si l'on me passe l'expression, ne manque pas de souffle. Evoquer Genève, à ce stade, est vraiment faire preuve d'une totale absence du sens des réalités.

Un bombardier qui largue 10 tonnes de bombes à 10.000 mètres d'altitude ne détruit certainement pas que des objectifs militaires. Alors, de grâce! A la guerre comme à la guerre et tous les coups sont permis.

En Vietnam, en Corée et ailleurs, les Américains —ces parangons de vertu— grillaient au lance-flamme des Vietnamiens sortant de leur refuge sous-terrain les bras hant levés en signe international de reddition. Sans parler du napalm, utilisé indistinctement pour brûler des familles entières, en Algérie, au Vietnam, et j'en passe!

Et pour rester dans l'horreur, qu'ou me permette de poser une devinette à tout être humain qui vit sur cette planète:

Vous êtes seul dans votre champ, à l'anbe d'un jour printanier. Votre femme, vos cinq enfants, vos parents et beaux-parents devraient vous rejoindre un peu plus tard pour vous apporter du café chaud et des galettes odorantes. Au loin, dans un ciel bleu azur, un avion bombardier lâche sa cargaison de 10.000 kilogrammes d'explosifs sur le village, enterrant, en l'espace de dix secondes, tout ce qui a fait votre vie. Vous êtes seul aux champs; vous êtes seul à jamais. L'avion a eu des problèmes techniques. Le pilote a sauté en parachute. Capturé par les villageois, on vous le ramène quelques temps plus tard, bien portant, le sourire encore aux lèvres du sentiment de sa mission accomplie, sur les lieux mêmes de son crime, sur les décombres de ce qui a été votre jude, votre bonheur, votre raison d'être. Que faites vous de ce pilote?

Il n'est pas besoin de sondage de l'opinion publique, ni de composer CANNIBAL sur son Minitel, pour connaître les réponses. Elles varieront sous toutes les latitudes du Globe entre «Je le mange crus», «je le découpe en rondelles» et «je le fais griller à petit feu».

Mais vous n'êtes pas Selon MM. Bush, Major et autres, il faudrait le livrer à la Croix-Rouge et se conformer strictement aux termes de la Convention de Genève, votée en l'An de Grâce 1900-é-des-poussières. On croit rêver. Les pays du Maghreb viennent de demander la réunion du Conseil de Sécurité pour définir un processus de cessez-le-feu. Réponse: il est trop tard... ou trop tôt. Plus sibyllin que moi, tu meurs.

En conclusion, c'est avec amertume et déception que je note —entre autres malheureusement— les réactions de quelques personnalités dominantes:

—M. Naguib Mahfouz, écrivain de renom, prix Nobel de littérature, Egyptien et Arabe de surcroit, dont l'âge, la culture et l'intelligence font, en principe, un pilier de la Sagesse mondiale, lance, dans des pamphlets qui frôlent l'indécence, un réquisitoire contre M. Saddam, fier et incontestable de tout Arabe digne de ce nom.

—M. Bush, qui ajoute à la violence de ses diatribes, une scatalogie indigne d'un président de la République la plus puissante du monde, proclamant à la face du monde qu'il va «botter le derrière de Saddam» (et je suis poli car le mot «ass» en anglais est beaucoup plus péjoratif), ne fait que prouver son manque de self-control et son inaptitude à résoudre les problèmes pacifiquement.

—Manifestement à la solde des Etats-Unis, M. Perez de Cuellar, censé être le fléau de la balance, symbole de Justice, s'est complètement effacé de la scène politique pendant la crise, pour ne réapparaître que lorsqu'il était trop tard. Devant l'échec de sa mission, une seule sortie possible et digne: démissionner de son poste, à l'instar de certains ministres français, soviétiques, turcs, et autres généraux.

—M. Gorbatchev, prix Nobel de la Paix... sans commentaire. (Les Etats-Unis doivent regretter actuellement cette attribution).

Il est triste de constater que la Sagesse, «cette parfaite connaissance de toutes les choses que l'Homme peut savoir», n'est hélas qu'une coquille de noix, en déresse sur l'Océan des âges.

Rachid Bouteffa  
Pilote de ligne algérien  
Ancien pilote de chasse  
dans l'armée irakienne

## Voyage

### A la découverte... de soi

L'été passé, j'étais en Afrique. Ce ne fut pas un voyage ordinaire. Tout mon être en fut frappé, choqué, bouleversé. Mes conceptions, mes idées et les éléments les plus profonds de mon inconscient furent secoués par un séisme. Jusque là je vivais (je sais maintenant que je dérivaient dire «vivotaient») en tranquillité, en sécurité psychologique. Je me vantrais et me complaisais dans une stabilité qu'aucun doute ne venait jamais perturber. Tout cela est fini aujourd'hui. Tout cela appartient au passé.

En apparence, la capitale ressemble à toutes les villes occidentales. On y trouve des bâtiments modernes et même des gratte-ciel qui touchent les nuages, des rues droites et spacieuses encombrées de voitures, et les établissements habituels: banques, magasins, bureaux de poste et stations de chemin de fer. Mais je dis bien «en apparence». Promène-toi dans les rues et observe les indigènes en oubliant les Européens qui vivent aussi là-bas. Sous leur vêtement moderne on sent encore les hommes vrais, qui s'agissent et s'efforcent de briser leurs entraves. Regarde la couleur noire de leur peau; c'est la couleur des ténèbres, ténèbres de l'inconscient et de l'avant-civilisation. Ecoute-les parler et rire, regarde-les bouger de tout leur corps. Corps gracile et non étiolés, corps vivant où la nature palpite encore. Quand ils rient, leur rire vient des profondeurs. Il ne prend pas la forme que nous lui connaissons d'un rictus crispé se dépliant sur leurs visages. Regarde comme ils marchent: ils dansent, et cela dit beaucoup. Leur vêtement moderne est encore le leur, mais elles ne faisaient que susciter mille questions aujourd'hui. Des questions sur ma vie jusqu'ici, des questions sur moi-même. Qui étais-je? Que faisais-je là? Que faisais-je dans ce monde? Questions sans contexte social, questions d'un monde sans société. J'étais seul au monde et, enfin, j'ai vu mon visage original. J'étais dans un monde dénué, dénué de toute végétation ou consolation. Un monde cru et cruel, sans merci. J'étais dans un monde primordial, dans le monde tel qu'il est. Et j'ai vu des choses. J'ai compris la vanité et l'imanité des actes

toujours aimée. Je t'ai toujours chérie. Toujours tu m'as apporté le soulagement et la consolation. Cette fois aussi je suis rapproché de toi espérant être soulagé et réconforté. En vain.

L'effet des deux semaines précédentes avait commencé à m'enivrer et à me pénétrer sournoisement. Cette fois d'où il venait mais lui aussi conspirait, avec les autres, contre moi. Contre moi qui étais seul et vulnérable. J'ai passé de longues soirées à discuter avec lui après son retour de la pêche. C'était en fait un monologue: il parlait et j'écoutes; il posait des questions et n'attendait pas mes réponses. C'était son habitude que de lancer des questions à brûle-pourpoint. Un soir il m'a dit: «il faut que les éléments aient confiance en toi pour te révéler un de leur secret». Une autre fois il m'a dit: «Regarde les gens. Ils sont si fous! Ils sont à ce point charmé par le soleil, qu'ils oublient l'obscurité et qu'ils ne s'en souviennent que trop tard». Il a encore «Il faut toujours diminuer! Les autres croissent, mais moi je diminue». Et d'autres paraboles énigmatiques qui m'ont transpercé comme l'éclair.

Finalement, je suis parti, plus agité qu'avant à l'idée de retrouver la capitale. Quelques jours plus tard, j'ai pris l'avion et j'ai acheté mon voyage. Mais ce voyage ne m'a pas quitté, c'est lui qui me dérangeait. J'étais dans un monde dénué, dénué de toute végétation ou consolation. Un monde cru et cruel, sans merci. J'étais dans un monde primordial, dans le monde tel qu'il est. Et j'ai vu des choses. J'ai compris la vanité et l'imanité des actes

Maher Darwisch

## A la recherche de boucs émissaires

Maintenant que la guerre avait éclaté, il fallait bien trouver les «boucs-émissaires» sur lesquels on pourraient définitivement rejeter la responsabilité de tous les dégâts, horreurs et souffrances qui allaient en résulter.

Pour les médias de la coalition, il n'y avait pas l'ombre d'un doute: Saddam et sa «clique» étaient les vrais coupables. Ils avaient attaqué un pays souverain, comptant près de 400.000 nationaux (plus 1 million et demi de serfs), sans aucune considération du fait que ce pays était membre à part entière de l'ONU (en instance de décès) ainsi que de la très regrettée Ligue Arabe.

Voici un extrait d'une conversation qu'en eut dernièrement Shiry, envoyée spéciale d'une chaîne de télévision renommée, avec un intellectuel jordanien du nom de Sharif.

—Et bien Sharif, pourquoi l'Irak a-t-il envahi un pays souverain?

—Vous devez savoir tout de même Shiry que le Koweït (surement sur l'instigation de Washington) a poussé à bout la patience de l'Irak.

—Oui, je sais bien, mais tous les différends frontaliers nu autres ne peuvent justifier l'agression du 2 août. Il y a tout de même des instances internationales pour ce genre de conflits!

—Ecoutez, Shiry. Je suppose que vous n'allez pas porter plainte au commissariat de police chaque fois que votre petit frère vous casse les pieds: vous vous contentez de lui administrer une bonne fessée, c'est tout. C'est exactement ce qu'avait cru faire l'Irak. Il ne pouvait tout de même pas traiter le Koweït en pays étranger: ce dernier lui a toujours appartenu et ne lui a été volé qu'assez récemment!

—Et alors! Une bonne partie de la Pologne appartenait bien au troisième Reich, mais l'Allemagne réunie ne traite pas pour autant cette partie en «petit frère», comme vous dites!

—C'est très différent. Vous vous rappelez sans doute qu'en 1899 les Britanniques, moyennant de l'argent, des cadeaux et certains services, avaient réussi à convaincre le Cheikh du Koweït de signer un traité par lequel celui-ci leur donnait la main-mise sur les affaires extérieures du sous-département qu'il contrôlait. (Ce cheikh, disent les mauvaises langues, raffolait de jeunes matelots tout blonds.) Naturellement, ce traité n'avait aucune valeur légale car le Koweït (ainsi d'ailleurs que l'Irak) faisaient partie de l'Empire Ottoman. Imaginez un peu le sous-préfet de L'Espresso (sous-préfecture de la Gironde), par exemple, signer un traité avec l'Irak donnant à Saddam la main-mise sur les affaires extérieures de ce sous-département!

Néanmoins, les Britanniques voulaient faire comprendre aux Boches qu'ils ne devaient pas étendre leur ligne de chemin de fer Berlin-Bagdad jusqu'au Golfe. En 1914, le Koweït fut déclaré protectorat britannique, les Ottomans s'étant rangés du côté de l'Allemagne dans la première guerre mondiale. La découverte ultérieure de pétrole dans ce pays a empêché, jusqu'en 2 août dernier, sa restitution à l'Irak.

Avouez tout de même qu'il est absolument ridicule et injuste qu'un pays comme l'Irak, de près de 400.000 km<sup>2</sup> ne puisse accéder aux

# Economy

OECD chief sees impact of Gulf war shifting with variances

DAVOS, Switzerland (R) — The Gulf war should have a limited impact on the world economy if the conflict does not spread, more advanced weapons are not used, and terrorists do not cause serious damage, a top economist said.

Jean-Claude Paye, secretary-general of the Paris-based Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), said the main economic impact so far had been the over-reaction of many consumers and companies.

Paye said it was impossible to be certain exactly what impact the war would have on the world economy.

"But if there is no geographical expansion, no technological upgrading of the war, as compared with today, probably the economic impact will be limited," he told Reuters in an interview.

He said terrorism could have a serious impact if, for instance, many refineries were blown up, but so far this had not been a serious problem.

Commenting on what he saw as over-reaction to the war, he said: "When I learn the day after the war broke out that many, many companies in the United States and everywhere had decided to forbid any travel of their managers or high officials, I was appalled."

Paye, in Davos for the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum, said he was also shocked to find people in Paris hoarding foodstuffs, saying this was further proof of what he called the excessive impact of the media.

"You have an exaggeration of the reactions of the consumers and companies."

The OECD, a 24-nation think-tank, predicted in a report last December, a month before the war broke out, that output among its members would grow by two per cent this year, down from 2.8 per cent in 1990.

It said then that the Gulf crisis finally pushing the weak U.S. economy into recession, but Germany and Japan would prop up the industrial world as a whole to a ninth consecutive year of growth.

Paye said the war's impact on oil prices should be limited because "the reduction of oil production linked to the (United Nations) embargo (on Iraq) has been matched since August by increased production of other countries."

## Recession-hit Britain counts the cost of war in the Gulf

LONDON (R) — Britain said Friday it would have to raise public spending this year by £600 million (\$1.2 billion) to meet costs of the Gulf war.

A treasury announcement was made as politicians and newspapermen asked who would pay for Britain's war role.

Public spending for the year to April is now put at £181.2 billion (\$362.4 billion), up from an earlier forecast of £180.6 billion (\$361.2 billion).

"Increases for military deployments to the Gulf account for almost all the increase in the estimate," the treasury said in a statement on its revised spending plans.

David Mellor, chief secretary to the treasury, flew to the United Arab Emirates Friday to try to secure some cash help.

This week Germany pledged £75 million (\$550 million) to Britain. Saudi Arabia will also meet some expenses.

But this will be a fraction of the total and Britain, in the grip of a severe recession, is seeking financial contributions from other nations, particularly from economic

superpower Japan.

The bill for six British Tornado aircraft lost so far is more than \$240 million. Some grim economic forecasts put British Gulf war expenditure at more than \$20 billion.

The British government, unlike America's, has been remarkably slow to pass the bat around," said an article published Friday in the Economist, a weekly magazine.

The Daily Mail summed up indignation over what one junior British minister called Europe's "feeble" response to the war.

"We are glad to play an honourable part in repelling aggression, but it will be a shabby business if we also have to bear an unfair share of the cost," a Mail editorial said.

Despite rising unemployment, high inflation and the worst spate of corporate disasters for decades Prime Minister John Major is riding high in opinion polls as the most popular premier since World War II leader Winston Churchill.

British victory over Argentina in the 1982 Falkland Islands war which buoyed the political fortunes of then prime minister Margaret Thatcher cost more than \$4 billion in today's terms.

Three times more troops are involved in the Gulf.

Defence Secretary Tom King told parliament Thursday that

But the uncertainty of war has hit British business confidence with industrialists wary of making big decisions, a trend which analysts said could intensify recession.

The German Bundesbank's decision to raise interest rates has given less scope for Britain to bring down its own punishingly high bank base interest rate, held at 14 per cent to fight inflation and defend the pound sterling.

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Soviet army patrol beats Lithuanian man

## Yeltsin's Radio Russia muzzled

MOSCOW (Agencies) — A liberal radio station said Saturday that Soviet state broadcasting authorities had cut it off from a major audience after it had angered President Mikhail Gorbachev with its coverage of the Baltics.

A spokesman for Radio Russia, whose programmes reflect the liberal views of Russian populist leader Boris Yeltsin, said the radio had been barred from access to the main frequencies used by most Soviet listeners.

Spokesman Sergei Pustovoitov said the move stemmed from a complaint by Gorbachev to broadcasting chief Leonid Kravchenko about the radio's coverage of the army crackdown in Lithuania on Jan. 13 in which 13 unarmed civilians were killed.

"The president asked Kravchenko 'how is it that on main frequencies there is anti-Soviet broadcasting?'

The move, which was certain to sour further the bad relations between Yeltsin and Gorbachev, underscored the Kremlin leader's shift to the conservative camp as problems in the country defied easy solutions.

Communist Party hardliners, capitalising on Gorbachev's shift, indicated that they were readying their forces for an offensive against liberals after a long time on the retreat.

The party surrendered its monopoly on power a year ago but made a comeback in recent months as Gorbachev, party general secretary as well as state president, moved to the right.

Russia's hardline Communist leader, Ivan Polozkov, in comments reported Saturday, said there could no longer be any question of a multi-party system being established.

"Our pseudo-democratic tramps on the constitution and kindle ethnic conflicts. The anti-Communist movement readily supports international capital. All this is done under the flag of saving perestroika." Polozkov said in a speech at a meeting of the party leadership last Thursday.

"There can be no talk now about any multi-party system. There is the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union), which upholds Socialist perestroika, and there are leaders with one political countenance — anti-Communism," he said.

Central Committee Secretary Oleg Shenin, calling for a purge of liberal and radicals in party ranks, said at the same meeting:

"There are many instances when Communists and also party organisations do not consider it necessary to abide by the rules of the CPSU and try, without permission, to modify them according to their own reasoning."

Gorbachev, in an apparent bid to display moderation after bloodshed in the Baltics, Friday ordered the creation of delegations for talks with Baltic leaders.

But Estonian Prime Minister Edgar Savaas told Balfax News Agency that a subsequent meeting of the Federation Council, which groups central and republic leaders, had been a difficult

one for the Baltic republics.

Savaas quoted Deputy Defence Minister Valentin Varennikov as saying at the meeting that the three Baltic republics — Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia — had "become a bastion of Western ideology and the hotbed for far-reaching American strategic plans."

TASS News Agency said speakers at the meeting cited anti-constitutional acts and violations of human rights as being responsible for the conflict in the Baltic republics, which are seeking to regain pre-World War II independence.

Liberal suspicions over Gorbachev's move to the right have been fuelled by a decision to send troops onto the streets of Moscow and other major cities in patrols and beat him, according to Azubal.

The man was hospitalised with facial cuts and jaw injuries. Azubal said.

In recent weeks, Soviet troops occupied key buildings in the Baltics and intensified efforts to round up draft evaders. They have conducted random searches on the streets of the capital and at roadblocks around the city.

More than 15 draft-age Lithuanian men have disappeared from the streets and are believed to have been taken by the army, according to the parliament's press office.

Since declaring independence last March 11, Lithuania's legislature has contended that citizens of the republic are not required to serve in the Soviet military.

The draft age in the Soviet Union is 18 to 28.

In another incident in Vilnius Friday, an army captain allegedly entered a house looking for a conscript and bit the conscript's father in the head, Azubal said.

It was unclear whether the captain was part of a joint patrol.

Pravda said the patrols began in major Soviet cities under orders from

Defence Minister Dmitri Yazov and Interior Minister Boris Pugo.

The Lithuanian parliamentary spokesman, Audrius Azubal, told reporters at a press conference that four or five policemen and soldiers armed with automatic weapons stopped the 22-year-old man in downtown Vilnius at about 9 p.m. (1800 GMT) Friday.

The patrol demanded the man's identification papers. But before he could produce his documents, the soldiers and police knocked him to the ground and beat him, according to Azubal.

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## Pakistan quake toll may surpass 200

ISLAMABAD (R) — The official death toll from Pakistan's most powerful earthquake in recent years rose to 175 Saturday, and government officials said it was likely to surpass 200.

Four remote mountainous districts in North West Frontier province, which borders Afghanistan, were hit by the quake early Friday. Officials said several hundred people were injured and hundreds of houses collapsed or were damaged.

The authorities said 175 bodies had been found by Saturday morning but they feared the death toll would rise as information trickled in from distant snow-bound areas of the province.

Army helicopters were flying medical supplies, food and clothing to the region.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was expected to visit one of the worst-hit areas in Chitral district later Saturday.

Several Islamic prayer leaders described the quake as a divine warning to Pakistan for its official anti-Iraq policy in the Gulf war.

"This is a warning from Allah to Muslims to get together to fight infidels," one told the Friday prayer's congregation in an Islamabad mosque.

Seismologists in Peshawar, the provincial capital, recorded the quake on the Richter Scale. A 1974 quake in the region registered 6.3 and killed 5,000 people.

Officials put the epicentre 200 kilometres northwest of the city, in the Hindukush.

The area is frequently shaken by tremors that can do severe damage in villages where houses are generally made of mud brick. Most of the casualties were caused by collapsing houses, officials said.

Last Oct. 25, a quake measuring 6.6 on the Richter Scale killed 13 people. One measuring 5.7 in 1981 killed 220 people in the same area.

Ground rescue parties have been sent in but access is difficult because of snow and the mountainous terrain, the officials said.

The region has had unusually heavy snow this winter and roads to many stricken villages are blocked, police said.

Two villages in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa area of Swat district were "completely destroyed," an official said in Peshawar. He said casualty figures were not available immediately because the area was snowbound.

Seventy-five deaths were reported from Swat, Chitral and the Dir district of North West Frontier Province. Official Bakhtar News Agency said 17 eastern and northern provinces were hit by the quake.

Afghanistan officials said relief workers had been unable to reach most of the affected provinces because of deep snow.

## Delay could undermine nuclear pact — U.S. negotiator

GENEVA (R) — U.S. Ambassador Richard Burt, head of the American delegation negotiating a reduction of nuclear weapons with the Soviet Union, has said years of work could be lost if a treaty was not concluded quickly.

"If we fail to agree by the end of February, there is a very real risk that the whole thing could unravel," Burt said on his return from superpower talks in Washington.

Burt told Reuters he expected to finish the treaty by the end of this month, as President George Bush and Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh agreed this week in Washington.

But he showed less optimism than he had ever done since he took the job in mid-1989.

His Soviet counterpart, Ambassador Yuri Nazarkin, said Moscow remained as committed as ever to a swift conclusion and that he also expected to meet the target date.

"We're in favour of a fast conclusion of this treaty," he said. "I think we'll finish the treaty by the end of February."

Problems in the negotiations were among reasons for the postponement of a planned Feb. 11-13 Moscow summit between Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. Now the summit is to be held some time before mid-1991.

U.S. officials worry that the Soviet military, which seems to have strengthened its hand in internal Soviet policy, is forcing the Soviet delegation in Geneva to take a harder line on the strategic arms reduction treaty (START).

"They (the military) seem to have a stronger voice in the arms

control process," said Burt. The START negotiations, which began in 1982, have the goal of making deep cuts in the two sides' long-range nuclear arsenals, now totalling about 12,000 warheads each.

The United States says the Soviet side rowed back on some of the agreements reached at a meeting in Houston in December between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Bessmertnykh's predecessor, Eduard Shevardnadze.

Nazarkin's view was that the two sides had different interpretations on what was agreed in Houston.

Both Burt and Nazarkin said that the main issues agreed there regarding Soviet SS-18 heavy missiles, Soviet backfire bombers and U.S. sales of Trident missiles to Britain — had once again been settled.

Only technical questions remained, but it still had to be seen whether the two sides would be able to push forward and eliminate all their differences in what most analysts say is a less friendly atmosphere.

"We're at an important crossroads. We're at a point where either we can finish in the near future or we won't finish in a very long time," Burt said.

The crucial question is whether the two governments have the political will to settle this early on."

He added: "We don't know the direction of future events in the Soviet Union, and I think the START treaty would be a very useful insurance policy."

"For the first seven years of this treaty, the Soviet Union will have to eliminate from its arsenal

one nuclear missile every 66 hours. That can't be bad. It has to be in our interest."

Diplomats said Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Alexei Obukhov and U.S. Under-Secretary of State Reginald Bartolomew would possibly begin several days of meetings in Geneva next Thursday to help push things along.

Meanwhile, U.S. officials say a dispute over an accord reducing conventional forces in Europe threatens to derail both pacts.

During talks in Washington this week, Secretary of State James Baker told Soviet Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh that the landmark treaty on conventional forces in Europe (CFE) will not be sent to the U.S. Senate for approval unless Moscow accepts the U.S. position, one official told Reuters.

If the CFE treaty, signed with much hoopla in Paris last November, is stymied, U.S. officials and congressional aides say it will be hard if not impossible to get the Senate to approve a strategic arms reduction pact (START).

U.S. officials accuse Moscow of deliberately circumventing CFE limits and say this raises doubts about Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's commitment to arms treaties that have already been signed.

Moscow claims to have stationed in Europe about 20,000 fewer tanks, artillery pieces and armoured combat vehicles than Washington says are there. Before CFE was signed, U.S. experts say, Moscow moved about 70,000 tanks and other equipment beyond the Ural Mountains to escape treaty limits.

More importantly, Moscow has

sought to reclassify three army mechanised divisions as "naval infantry" in an effort to save their equipment, including an estimated 1,000 tanks, from destruction mandated by the CFE treaty.

Bessmertnykh offered a compromise, promising that the units will not be expanded, but "we said that's not good enough. That's one where we have to give," one U.S. official said.

"They have to live up to what they signed. Otherwise, Baker said... bluntly to Bessmertnykh that we're not going to submit the treaty for ratification," he said.

Although arms control has been played down recently as U.S. and Soviet leaders cooperate in other areas such as the Gulf, failure to complete the CFE and START treaties would be a powerful sign of a deteriorating superpower relationship.

Officials say the outcome hangs largely on whether Gorbachev can or will assert control and tell the military to loosen its strong band over the negotiations.

His crackdown against pro-independence governments in the Baltics and his willingness to rely on the military and the KGB as a power base have raised questions in Washington about his reliability as a partner in treaties and other endeavours.

Referring to the dispute over CFE, one official said: "It's time for Gorbachev to settle this one."

"The military has had its run at trying to essentially squirm out of an obligation Gorbachev accepted freely on Nov. 19," when he joined U.S. President George Bush and a score of other leaders in signing the treaty, the official said.

More importantly, Moscow has

## 15 killed in burning jet at Los Angeles airport

LOS ANGELES (R) — A U.S. Air Boeing 737 burst into flames after colliding with a commuter plane and hitting a building as it landed at Los Angeles International Airport Friday night, killing at least 15 people and possibly 14 others, an airline spokeswoman said.

Fourty people were injured in the crash, 10 of them severely. But 21 people walked away from the flaming wreckage of the airplane, split in two by the impact of the crash, said the spokeswoman, Agnes Huff.

Firemen searched the blackened wreckage of the airliner, which had the top half of its rear section sheared off, for signs of the missing 14.

The remains of a small Skywest commuter Fairchild Metroliner plane were jammed under the belly of the twin-engined airliner.

Federal Aviation Administration officials said they believed at least one of the 10 passengers and two crewmembers on board the commuter plane, which was taxying for a flight to Palm Springs, California, was killed in the collision.

When he looked back the plane was engulfed in flames. "It was a miracle any of us survived," he said.

Eighty-two people were killed, including 15 on the ground, when a Aeromexico DC-9 airliner and a private Piper Cherokee plane collided in the air over Cerritos, 50 kilometres east of Los Angeles, on Aug. 31, 1986.

"When I looked out the window the back of the plane was on fire," an eyewitness who lives near the airport said.

## Column

Mother hires hit man to help daughter be cheerleader

HOUSTON (R) — An American mother was so intent on making sure her daughter got a place in a school cheerleading squad that she was willing to hire a hit man to kill a competitor's mother, authorities said Friday. Wade Webb Holloway, 36, of Channelview, Texas, plotted the murder in the hope that her daughter's 13-year-old rival would be overwhelmed with grief that she would drop out of the competition, Holloway was arrested and released on bail after being charged with soliciting a murder.

One survivor, Dr. Chul Hong, of Canton, Ohio, said he heard a loud noise and thought a tire had blown.

"Then I saw flames and everybody started screaming their heads off," he said. "I thought I was going to die."

Hong said he opened one of the plane's emergency exits doors and jumped on to a wing. "I then jumped down on to the ground and I ran away from the fire," he said.

When he looked back the plane was engulfed in flames. "It was a miracle any of us survived," he said.

Eighty-two people were killed, including 15 on the ground, when a Aeromexico DC-9 airliner and a private Piper Cherokee plane collided in the air over Cerritos, 50 kilometres east of Los Angeles, on Aug. 31, 1986.

"When I looked out the window the back of the plane was on fire," an eyewitness who lives near the airport said.

PARIS (R) — France's Claude Montana had become the first designer to win Paris fashion's most coveted prize twice in a row. He won the Golden Thimble Award for the best spring summer line with a daringly modern collection for Paris fashion house Lanvin, showing him to be a stylist bringing haute couture into the 21st century. Montana's designs included symmetrical skirts and tunics of glistening silk worn over metallically embroidered T-shirts. Halter tops were studded with seashells and mother-of-pearl, and dresses shimmered with white and lavender crystals.

Futuristic jackets, often with high stiff collars, made models look like they had just stepped out of a science fiction film. Many critics feel that Montana's stark minimalism responds to a need in the fashion world to break down boundaries and open new horizons. Others still prefer the classics. "He does very pretty things but I think two prizes in a row is a little too much. I also liked Yves Saint Laurent, and Givenchy was very nice too," said one fashion observer.

A ranking Croatian police officer, speaking on condition of anonymity, said his forces "will not let the military arrest Spegelj even if it means an open clash with the army."